

TALES OF GRIMM

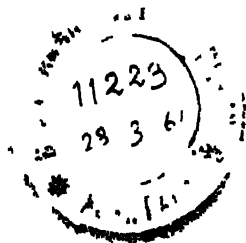
AND

ANDERSEN



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INTRODUCTION BY W. H. AUDEN



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IN THE winter time, when deep snow lay on the ground, a poor boy was forced to go out on a sledge to fetch wood. When he had gathered it together and packed it, he wished, as he was so frozen with cold, not to go home at once, but to light a fire and warm himself a little. So he scraped away the snow, and as he was thus clearing the ground, he found a tiny gold key. Hereupon he thought that where the key was, the lock must be also, and dug in the ground and found an iron chest. "If the key does but fit!" thought he; "no doubt there are precious things in that little box." He searched, but no keyhole was there. At last he discovered one, but so small that it was hardly visible. He tried it, and the key fitted it exactly. Then he turned it once round, and now we must wait until he has quite unlocked it and opened the lid, and then we shall learn what wonderful things were lying in that box.

The Brothers Grimm

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INTRODUCTION

By W. H. AUDEN

MANY deplorable features of modern life, irrationalism, nationalism, idolization of mass-feeling and mass-opinion, may be traced back to the Romantic reaction against the Enlightenment and its Polite Learning; but that same reaction is also responsible for the work of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm who, with their successors, made the fairy story a part of general education, a deed which few will regret. Much, too, can be said against middle-class family life in the nineteenth century, but in the midst of its heavy moral discipline, its horsehair sofas and stodgy meals, the average child was permitted and even encouraged to lead an exciting life in its imagination. There are more Gradgrinds now than there were then, and the twentieth century has yet to produce books for children equal to Hans Andersen's *Tales*, Edward Lear's *Books of Nonsense*, the two *Alices*, *Struwwelpeter*, or even Jules Verne.

Houses are smaller, servants are fewer, mothers have less time, or think they have, to read to their children, and neither the comic strip nor the radio has succeeded so far in providing a real substitute for the personally told tale which permits of interruptions and repeats.

Anyone who has to do with professional education today is aware that the schools are more and more being expected to replace the parents and take over the whole of the child's development, a task which is not only impossible but highly dangerous.

If people are sincere when they say that the great contemporary menace in every country is the encroachment of the power of the State over the individual citizen, they must not invite it to mold the thinking

of their children in their most impressionable years by refusing to help with their education themselves.

It is to be hoped that the publication of the tales of Grimm and Andersen in one inexpensive volume will be a step in the campaign to restore to parents the right and the duty to educate their children, which, partly through their own fault, and partly through extraneous circumstances, they are in danger of losing for good.

2

There are quite a number of people who disapprove of fairy tales for children, and on various grounds. Let us take the most reasonable first: those who claim that the fairy tale as we know it from Grimm and Andersen is not viable in modern culture. Such tales, they argue, developed in a feudally organized society which believed in magic, and are irrelevant to an industrialized democracy like our own. Luckily the test of viability is a simple one. If a tale is enjoyed by the reader, or audience, it is viable; if he finds it boring or incomprehensible, it is not. It is unlikely, for instance, that a culture without natural science and its methodology would make head or tail of Sherlock Holmes, or that a society which believed the future to be completely determined would find much sense in a story which turned on wishing, and it is very possible that certain details in European fairy stories cannot be transplanted to America. Miss Margaret Mead tells me that the traditional stepmother, which in Europe is a psychological euphemism for the mother in a malevolent aspect, is here a source of misunderstanding because there are too many actual stepmothers; one suspects, too, that in a society where the father plays as minor a role as he plays in America, the fairy tale giant is a less frighteningly important figure than he was to those of us who grew up under the shadow of a paternal discipline. However, one has only to tell the stories and observe the reaction to find out what, if anything, needs changing.

A child who has once been pleased with a tale likes, as a rule, to have it retold in identically the same words, but this should not lead parents to treat printed fairy stories as sacred texts. It is always much better to tell a story than read it out of a book, and, if a parent can produce what, in the actual circumstances of the time and the individual child, is an improvement on the printed text, so much the better.

The second charge against fairy tales is that they harm the child by frightening him or arousing his sadistic impulses. To prove the latter, one would have to show in a controlled experiment that children who have read fairy stories were more often guilty of cruelty than those who had not. Aggressive, destructive, sadistic impulses every child has and, on the whole, their symbolic verbal discharge seems to be rather

a safety valve than an incitement to overt action. As to fears, there are, I think, well-authenticated cases of children being dangerously terrified by some fairy story. Often, however, this arises from the child having only heard the story once. Familiarity with the story by repetition turns the pain of fear into the pleasure of a fear faced and mastered.

Lastly there are the people who object to fairy stories on the grounds that they are not objectively true, that giants, witches, two-headed dragons, magic carpets, etc., do not exist; and that, instead of indulging his fantasies in fairy tales, the child should be taught how to adapt to reality by studying history or mechanics. I find such people, I must confess, so unsympathetic and peculiar that I do not know how to argue with them. If their case were sound, the world should be full of Don Quixote-like madmen attempting to fly from New York to Philadelphia on a broomstick or covering a telephone with kisses in the belief that it was their enchanted girl friend.

No fairy story ever claimed to be a description of the external world and no sane child has ever believed that it was. There are children (and adults), certainly, who believe in magic, i.e., who expect their wishes to be granted without any effort on their part, but that is because their parents have spoiled them or driven them to despair by loving them too little, and their behavior would be the same if they had never heard the word "magic." An introverted child, as I know from personal experience, can as easily withdraw from the outer world with a water turbine as with a flying horse.

The only danger to healthy development that I can see in the fairy tale is the danger inherent in all works of art, namely, that the reader is tempted to identify himself with the hero in his triumphs and withdraw from him during his sufferings. Knowing, as the reader of the story, that it ends happily, he ignores the fact that the hero *in the story* does not know how it is going to end, and so fails to feel the hero's trials as real. Imagination, like reason, is a human faculty and therefore not foolproof.

3

A fairy story, as distinct from a merry tale, or an animal story, is a serious tale with a human hero and a happy ending. The progression of its hero is the reverse of the tragic hero's: at the beginning he is either socially obscure or despised as being stupid or untalented, lacking in the heroic virtues, but at the end, he has surprised everyone by demonstrating his heroism and winning fame, riches, and love. Though ultimately he succeeds, he does not do so without a struggle in which his success is in doubt, for opposed to him are not only natural difficulties like glass mountains, or barriers of flame, but also hostile wicked

powers, stepmothers, jealous brothers and witches. In many cases, indeed, he would fail were he not assisted by friendly powers who give him instructions or perform tasks for him which he cannot do himself; that is, in addition to his own powers, he needs luck, but this luck is not fortuitous but dependent upon his character and his actions. The tale ends with the establishment of justice; not only are the good rewarded but also the evil are punished.

Take, for example, "The Water of Life." Three brothers set out in turn on a difficult quest to find the water of life to restore the King, their sick father, to health. Each one meets a dwarf who asks him where he is going. The two elder give rude answers and are punished by being imprisoned in ravines. The third brother gives a courteous answer and is rewarded by being told where the water of life is and how to appease the lions who guard it, but is warned to leave before the clock strikes twelve. He reaches the enchanted castle, where he finds a princess who tells him to return in a year and marry her. At this point he almost fails because he falls asleep and only just manages to escape as the clock strikes twelve and the iron door shuts, carrying away a piece of his heel. On the way home he again meets the dwarf and begs him to release his brothers, which he does with a warning that they have bad hearts. The brothers steal the water of life from him and substitute salt water so that his father condemns him to be secretly shot. The huntsman entrusted with the task has not the heart to do it, and lets the young prince go away into the forest. Now begins a second quest for the Princess. She has built a golden road to test her suitors. Whoever rides straight up it is to be admitted, whoever rides to the side is not. When the two elder brothers come to it, they think "it would be a sin and a shame to ride over that" and so fail the test. At the end of the year, the exiled brother rides thither but is so preoccupied with thinking of the Princess that he never notices the golden road and rides straight up. They are married, the King learns how the elder brothers had betrayed the Prince, and they, to escape punishment, put to sea and never come back.

The hero is in the third or inferior position. (The youngest son inherits least.) There are two quests, each involving a test which the hero passes and his brothers fail.

The first test is the encounter with the dwarf. The elder brothers disregard him a) because he looks like the last person on earth who could help them; b) they are impatient and thinking only of their success; and c) what is wrong with their concentration on their task is, firstly, over-self-confidence in their own powers and, secondly, the selfishness of their motive. They do not really love their father but want him to reward them.

The hero, on the other hand, is a) humble enough; b) cares enough for his father's recovery; and c) has a loving disposition toward all men, so that he asks the dwarf for assistance and gets it.

The second test of the golden road is a reversal of the first: the right thing to do this time is to take no notice of it. The brothers who dismissed the dwarf notice the road because of its worldly value, which is more to them than any Princess, while the hero, who paid attention to the dwarf, ignores the road because he is truly in love.

The Water of Life and the Princess are guarded by lions; these, in this tale, are not malevolent but ensure that no one shall succeed who has not learned the true way. The hero almost fails here by forgetting the dwarf's warning and falling asleep; further it is through falling asleep and not watching his brothers that they almost succeed in destroying him. The readiness to fall asleep is a sign of the trustfulness and lack of fear which are the qualities which bring about his success; at the same time it is pointed out that, carried too far, they are a danger to him.

4

If such a tale is not history, what is it about? Broadly speaking, and in most cases, the fairy tale is a dramatic projection in symbolic images of the life of the psyche, and it can travel from one country to another, one culture to another culture, whenever what it has to say holds good for human nature in both, despite their differences. Insofar as the myth is valid, the events of the story and its basic images will appeal irrespective of the artistic value of their narration; a genuine myth, like the Chaplin clown, can always be recognized by the fact that its appeal cuts across all differences between highbrow and lowbrow tastes. Further, no one conscious analysis can exhaust its meaning. There is no harm, however, if this is realized, in trying to give one.

Thus reading "The Water of Life," it occurs to me that the two quests, for the water which heals the old sick King and the Princess through marriage with whom the new life will come into being are one and the same, though it is only by first trying to restore the past that one comes to discover one's future path. One's true strength rarely lies in the capacities and faculties of which one is proud, but frequently in those one regards as unimportant or even as weaknesses. Success can never be achieved by an act of conscious will alone; it always requires the co-operation of grace or luck. But grace is not arbitrary; it is always there to assist anyone who is humble enough to ask for it and those who reject it convert it by their own act of rejection into a negative force; they get what they demand. There is no joy or success without risk and suffering, and those who try to avoid suffering

fail to obtain the joy, but get the suffering anyway. Finally, and above all, one must not be anxious about ultimate success or failure but think only about what it is necessary to do at the present moment. What seems a story stretched out in time takes place in fact at every instant; the proud and the envious are even now dancing in red-hot shoes or rolling downhill in barrels full of nails; the trustful and loving are already married to princesses.

5

The Grimm brothers were the first men to attempt to record folk tales exactly as they were told by the folk themselves without concessions to bourgeois prudery or cultured literary canon, an example which, in the case of prudery, at least, has not been followed, I am sorry to say, by their translators.

Hans Andersen, so far as I know, was the first man to take the fairy tale as a literary form and invent new ones deliberately. Some of his stories are, like those of Perrault, a reworking of folk material—"The Wild Swans," for example, is based on two stories in the Grimm collection, "The Six Swans," and "The Twelve Brothers"—but his best tales, like "The Snow Queen," or "The Hardy Tin Soldier," or "The Ice Maiden" are not only new in material but as unmistakably Andersen's as if they were modern novels.

Compared with the Grimm tales, they have the virtues and the defects of a conscious literary art. To begin with, they tend to be parables rather than myths.

"Little Kay was blue with cold—nay almost black—but he did not know it, for the Snow Queen had kissed away the icy shiverings, and his heart was little better than a lump of ice. He went about dragging some sharp flat pieces of ice which he placed in all sorts of patterns, trying to make something out of them, just as when we at home have little tablets of wood, with which we make patterns and call them a 'Chinese puzzle.'

"Kay's patterns were most ingenious, because they were the 'Ice Puzzles of Reason.' In his eyes they were excellent and of the greatest importance: this was because of the grain of glass still in his eye. He made many patterns forming words, but he never could find the right way to place them for one particular word, a word he was most anxious to make. It was 'Eternity.' The Snow Queen had said to him that if he could find out this word he should be his own master, and she would give him the whole world and a new pair of skates. But he could not discover it."

Such a passage could never occur in a folk tale. Firstly, because the human situation with which it is concerned is an historical one created by Descartes, Newton, and their successors, and, secondly, because no

folk tale would analyze its own symbols and explain that the game with the ice-splinters was the game of reason. Further, the promised reward, "the whole world and a new pair of skates" has not only a surprise and a subtlety of which the folk tale is incapable, but, also a uniqueness by which one can identify its author.

It is rarely possible, therefore, to retell an Andersen story in other words than his; after the tough and cheerful adventurers of the folk tales, one may be irritated with the Sensitive-Plantishness and rather namby-pamby Christianity of some of Andersen's heroes, but one puts up with them for the sake of the wit and sharpness of his social observation and the interest of his minor characters. One remembers the old lady with the painted flowers in her hat and the robber's daughter in "The Snow Queen" as individuals in a way that one fails to remember any of the hundreds of witches and young girls in the folk tales. The difference may be most clearly seen by a comparison of stories about inanimate objects.

"Soon . . . they came to a little brook, and, as there was no bridge or foot-plank, they did not know how they were to get over it. The straw hit on a good idea, and said: 'I will lay myself straight across, and then you can walk over on me as on a bridge.' The straw therefore stretched itself from one bank to the other, and the coal, who was of an impetuous disposition, tripped quite holdly onto the newly built bridge. But when she had reached the middle, and heard the water rushing beneath her, she was, after all, afraid, and stood still, and ventured no farther. The straw, however, began to burn, broke in two pieces, and fell into the stream. The coal slipped after her, hissed when she got into the water, and breathed her last. The bean, who had prudently stayed behind on the shore, could not but laugh at the event, was unable to stop, and laughed so heartily that she burst. It would have been all over with her, likewise, if, by good fortune, a tailor who was traveling in search of work, had not sat down to rest by the brook. As he had a compassionate heart, he pulled out his needle and thread and sewed her together. The bean thanked him most prettily, but, as the tailor used black thread, all beans since then have a black seam."

So Grimm. The fantasy is built upon a factual question. "Why do beans have a black seam?" The characterization of the straw, the coal, and the bean does not extend beyond the minimum required by their respective physical qualities. The whole interest lies in the incidents.

Andersen's story, "The Darning Needle," on the other hand, presupposes no question about its protagonist.

"The darning needle kept her proud behavior and did not lose her good humor. And things of many kinds swam over her, chips and straws and pieces of old newspapers.

"'Only look how they sail!' said the darning needle. 'They don't know what is under them! . . . See, there goes a chip thinking of nothing in the world but of himself—of a chip! There's a straw going by now. How he turns! how he twirls about! Don't think only of yourself, you might easily run up against a stone. There swims a bit of newspaper. What's written upon it has long been forgotten, and yet it gives itself airs. I sit quietly and patiently here. I know who I am and I shall remain what I am.'

"One day something lay close beside her that glittered splendidly; then the darning needle believed that it was a diamond; but it was a bit of broken bottle; and because it shone, the darning needle spoke to it, introducing herself as a breastpin.

"'I suppose you are a diamond?' she observed.

"'Why, yes, something of that kind.'

"And then each believed the other to be a very valuable thing; and they began speaking about the world, and how very conceited it was.

"'I have been in a lady's box,' said the darning needle, 'and this lady was a cook. She had five fingers on each hand, and I never saw anything so conceited as those five fingers. And yet they were only there that they might take me out of the box and put me back into it.'

"'Were they of good birth?' asked the bit of bottle.

"'No, indeed, but very haughty. . . . There was nothing but bragging among them, and therefore I went away.'

"'And now we sit here and glitter!' said the bit of bottle."

Here the action is subordinate to the actors, providing them with a suitable occasion to display their characters which are individual, i.e., one can easily imagine another Darning Needle and another Bit of Bottle who would say quite different things. Inanimate objects are not being treated anthropomorphically, as in Grimm; on the contrary, human beings have been transmuted into inanimate objects in order that they may be judged without prejudice, with the same objective vision that Swift tries for through changes of size. The difference is one that distinguishes all primitive literature, primitive, that is, in attitude, not in technique, from modern.

In the folk tale, as in the Greek epic and tragedy, situation and character are hardly separable; a man reveals what he is in what he does, or what happens to him is a revelation of what he is. In modern literature, what a man is includes all the possibilities of what he may become, so that what he actually does is never a complete revelation. The defect of primitive literature is the defect of primitive man, a fatalistic lack of hope which is akin to a lack of imagination. The danger for modern literature and modern man is paralysis of action through excess of imagination, an imprisonment in the void of infinite possibilities. That is why, maybe, contemporary novelists seem to have their greatest difficulties with their plots, for we, their characters, find it so

much easier to stop to think than to go into action with the consequence, all too often, that, more apathetic than any primitive hero, we wait helplessly for something, usually terrible, to be done to us.

6

There'll Always Be a Teachers' College.

"How is it possible that human sense should conceive there ever were in the World such multitudes of famous Knights-Errant, so many Emperors . . . palfreys, rambling damsels, serpents, monsters, giants, unheard-of adventures, so many sorts of enchantments. . . . As for my own particular, I confess, that, while I read them, and do not reflect that they are nothing but Falsehood and Folly, they give me some satisfaction, but I no sooner remember what they are, but I cast the best of them from me and would deliver them up to the flames if I had a fire near me. . . . If, led away by your natural inclination, you will read books of heroism and great exploits, read in the Holy Scriptures the Book of Judges, where you will find wonderful truths and glorious actions not to be questioned, the reading of which diverts, instructs, pleases, and surprises the most judicious readers."

"Very well," cried Don Quixote, "then all those books must be fabulous, though licensed by kings, approved by the Examiners, read with general satisfaction, and applauded by the Better Sort and the Meaner, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. . . ."

"For shame, Sir, forbear uttering such blasphemies. And do you, good Sir, believe me, and, as I said to you before, read these books, which you may find will banish all melancholy, if you are troubled with it, and sweeten your disposition if it be harsh."

TALES OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM

THE TWELVE DANCING PRINCESSES

ONCE UPON a time there was a king who had twelve daughters, each more beautiful than the other. They slept together in a hall where their beds stood close to one another. At night when they had gone to bed, the king locked the door and bolted it. But when he unlocked it in the morning, he noticed that their shoes had been danced to pieces, and nobody could explain how it happened.

So the King sent out a proclamation saying that anyone who could discover where the princesses did their night's dancing might choose one of them to be his wife and should reign after his death. But whoever presented himself, and failed to make the discovery after three days and nights, was to forfeit his life.

A prince soon appeared and offered to take the risk. He was well received, and at night was taken into a room adjoining the hall where the princesses slept. His bed was made up there, and he was to watch and see where they went to dance. The door of the room was left open, so that they could not do anything or leave without being seen. But the prince's eyes grew heavy and he fell asleep. When he woke in the morning, all the princesses had been dancing, for the soles of their shoes were full of holes. The second and third evenings passed with the same results. The prince was then granted no mercy, and his head was cut off. Many others came after him and offered to take the risk, but they all forfeited their lives.

Now it happened that a poor soldier, who had been wounded and could no longer serve, found himself on the road to the town where the King lived. There he fell in with an old woman who asked him where he was going.

"I really don't know myself," he said. And he added in fun, "I should

like to discover where the King's daughters dance their shoes into holes, and after that I should like to become king."

"That is not so difficult," said the old woman. "You must not drink the wine which will be brought to you in the evening, but must pretend to be fast asleep." Whereupon she gave him a short cloak, saying, "When you wear this you will be invisible, and then you can slip out after the twelve princesses."

When the soldier heard this good advice he considered it seriously, plucked up the courage to appear before the King, and offered himself as suitor. He was as well received as the others and was dressed in royal garments.

In the evening, when bedtime came, he was conducted to the ante-room. As he was about to go to bed the eldest princess appeared, bringing him a cup of wine. But he had fastened a sponge under his chin and let the wine run down into it, so that he did not drink one drop. Then he lay down, and when he had been quiet a little while he began to snore as though in the deepest sleep.

The twelve princesses heard him and laughed. The eldest said, "He too must forfeit his life."

Then they got up, opened cupboards, chests, and cases, and brought out their beautiful dresses. They decked themselves before the glass, skipping about and reveling in the prospect of the dance.

Only the youngest sister said, "I don't know what it is. You may rejoice, but I feel so strange. A misfortune is certainly hanging over us."

"You are a little goose," answered the eldest. "You are always frightened. Have you forgotten how many princes have come here in vain? Why, I need not have given the soldier a sleeping draught at all! The blockhead would never have awakened."

When they were all ready they looked at the soldier, but his eyes were shut and he did not stir. So they thought they would soon be quite safe. Then the eldest went up to one of the beds and knocked on it. It sank into the earth and they descended through the opening one after another, the eldest first.

The soldier, who had noticed everything, did not hesitate long, but threw on his cloak and went down behind the youngest. Halfway down he trod on her dress.

She was frightened and said, "What was that? Who is holding on to my dress?"

"Don't be so foolish. You must have caught it on a nail," said the eldest.

Then they went right down, and when they got quite underground

they stood in a marvelously beautiful avenue of trees. All the leaves were silver, and glittered and shone.

The soldier thought, "I must take away some token with me." And as he broke off a twig, a sharp crack came from the tree.

The youngest cried out, "All is not well! Did you hear that sound?"

"Those are triumphal salutes because we have eluded our 'prince'!" said the eldest.

Next they came to an avenue where all the leaves were of gold, and at last into a third where they were of shining diamonds. From both these the soldier broke off a twig, and there was a crack each time which made the youngest princess start with terror. But the eldest maintained that the sounds were only triumphal salutes. They went faster and came to a great lake. Close to the bank lay twelve little boats and in every boat sat a handsome prince. They had expected the twelve princesses and each took one with him, but the soldier seated himself by the youngest.

Then said her prince, "I don't know why, but the boat is much heavier today. I am obliged to row with all my strength to get it along."

"I wonder why it is," said the youngest, "unless perhaps it is the hot weather. It is strangely hot."

On the opposite side of the lake stood a splendid brightly lighted castle from which came the sound of the joyous music of trumpets and drums. They rowed across, and every prince danced with his love. And the soldier danced too, unseen. If one of the princesses held a cup of wine he drank out of it, so that it was empty when she lifted it to her lips. This frightened the youngest one, but the eldest always silenced her.

They danced till three next morning, when their shoes were danced into holes and they were obliged to stop. The princes took them back across the lake, and this time the soldier took his seat beside the eldest. On the bank they said farewell to their princes and promised to come again the next night.

When they got to the steps the soldier ran on ahead, lay down in bed, and when the twelve came lagging by, slowly and wearily, he began to snore again very loud, so that they said, "We are quite safe so far as he is concerned." Then they took off their beautiful dresses, put them away, placed the worn-out shoes under their beds, and lay down.

The next morning the soldier determined to say nothing, but to see the wonderful doings again. So he went with them the second and third nights. Everything was just the same as the first time, and they danced each time till their shoes were in holes. The third time the soldier took away a wine cup as a token.

When the appointed hour came for his answer, he took the three twigs and the cup with him and went before the King. The twelve princesses stood behind the door listening to hear what he would say.

When the King put the question, "Where did my daughters dance their shoes to pieces in the night?" he answered, "With twelve princes in an underground castle." Then he produced the tokens.

The King sent for his daughters and asked them whether the soldier had spoken the truth. As they saw that they were betrayed and would gain nothing by lies, they were obliged to admit all.

Thereupon the King asked the soldier which one he would choose as his wife. He answered, "I am no longer young. Give me the eldest."

So the wedding was celebrated that very day, and the kingdom was promised to him on the King's death. But for every night which the underground princes had spent in dancing with the princesses, a day was added to their time of enchantment.

THE WREN AND THE BEAR

ONCE UPON a time a bear and a wolf were taking a walk in a wood. It was summer, and the bear heard a bird singing most beautifully. He said, "Brother Wolf, what kind of bird is that singing so beautifully?"

"That is the King of the birds, and we must bow down to it." But really it was a wren.

"If that is so," said the bear, "I should like to see his royal palace. Come, you must take me to it."

"That's not so easy," said the wolf. "You must wait till the Queen comes."

Soon afterwards the Queen made her appearance, bringing food in her beak, and the King came with her to feed their little ones. The bear would have liked to go in at once, but the wolf held him by the sleeve and said, "No, you must wait till the King and Queen fly away again."

So they marked the opening of the nest and trudged on. But the bear had no rest till he could see the royal palace, and before long he went back. The King and the Queen had gone out again. He peeped in and saw five or six young ones lying in the nest.

"Is that the royal palace?" cried the bear. "What a miserable place! And do you mean to say that you are royal children? You must be changelings."

When the young wrens heard this, they were furious. They shrieked, "No, indeed we're not. Our parents are honest people. We must have this out with you."

The bear and the wolf were very much frightened. They turned around and ran home to their dens.

But the young wrens continued to shriek and scream aloud. And when their parents came back with more food, they said, "We won't touch so much as the leg of a fly, even if we starve, till you tell us whether we are really your lawful children or not. The bear has been here calling us names."

Then said the old King, "Only be quiet, and this shall be seen to."

Thereupon he and his wife flew off to the bear in his den and called in to him, "Old Bruin, why have you been calling our children names? It will turn out badly for you, and it will lead to a bloody war between us."

So war was declared, and all the four-footed animals were called together—the ox, the ass, the cow, the stag, the deer, and every other creature on the earth.

But the wren called together every creature which flew in the air. He called not only the birds both large and small, but also the gnats, the hornets, the bees, and the flies.

When the time came for the war to begin, the wrens sent out scouts to discover where the commanding generals of the enemy were to be found. The gnats were the most cunning of all. They swarmed into the wood where the enemy were assembled, and at last they hid themselves under a leaf of the tree where the orders were being given.

The bear called the fox up to him and said, "You are the slyest of all the animals, Reynard. You shall be our general and lead us."

"Very good," said the fox, "but what shall we have for a signal?" But nobody could think of anything. Then said the fox, "I have a fine, long, bushy tail which looks almost like a red feather brush. When I hold my tail erect, things are going well and you must march forward at once. But if it droops, you must all run away as hard as ever you can."

When the gnats heard this they flew straight home and told the wrens every detail.

When the day broke, all the four-footed animals came rushing to the spot where the battle was to take place. They came with such a tramping that the earth shook. The wren and his army also came swarming through the air. They fluttered and buzzed enough to terrify one.

And then they made for one another.

The wren sent the hornet down with orders to seat herself under the tail of the fox and to sting him with all her might.

When the fox felt the first sting, he quivered and raised one leg in the air. But he bore it bravely and kept his tail erect. At the second sting he was forced to let it droop for a moment. But the third time he could bear it no longer: he screamed, and down went his tail between his legs. When the animals saw this they thought all was lost, and off they ran helter-skelter as fast as they could go, each to his own den.

So the birds won the battle.

When it was over, the King and the Queen flew home to their children and cried, "Children, be happy! Eat and drink to your hearts' content. We have won the battle."

But the young wrens said, "We won't eat till the bear comes here to make an apology, and says that we are really and truly your lawful children."

The wren flew to the bear's den and cried, "Old Bruin, you will have to come and apologize to my children for calling them names, or else you will have all your ribs broken."

So in great terror the bear crept to the nest and apologized, and at last the young wrens were satisfied. They ate and drank and made merry till far into the night.

THE TWELVE BROTHERS

ONCE UPON a time there lived a king and a queen very peacefully together. They had twelve children, all boys.

Now the King said to the Queen one day, "If our thirteenth child should be a girl the twelve boys shall die, so that her riches may be the greater and the kingdom fall to her alone."

Then he caused twelve coffins to be made, and they were filled with shavings and a little pillow laid in each, and they were brought and put into a locked-up room. And the King gave the key to the Queen and told her to say nothing about it to anyone.

But the mother sat the whole day sorrowing, so that her youngest son, who never left her and to whom she had given the Biblical name Benjamin, said to her, "Dear mother, why are you so sad?"

"Dearest child," answered she, "I dare not tell you."

But he let her have no peace until she went and unlocked the room and showed him the twelve coffins with the shavings and the little pillows.

Then she said, "My dear Benjamin, your father has caused these coffins to be made for you and your eleven brothers, and if I bring a

little girl into the world you are all to be put to death together and buried therein."

She wept as she spoke, and her little son comforted her and said, "Weep not, dear mother. We will save ourselves and go far away."

Then she answered, "Yes, go with your eleven brothers out into the world, and let one of you always sit on the top of the highest tree that can be found and keep watch upon the tower of this castle. If a little son is born I will put out a white flag, and then you may safely venture back again. But if it is a little daughter I will put out a red flag, and then flee away as fast as you can, and the dear God watch over you. Every night will I arise and pray for you—in winter that you may have a fire to warm yourselves by, and in summer that you may not languish in the heat."

After that, when she had given her sons her blessing, they went away out into the wood. One after another kept watch, sitting on the highest oak tree and looking towards the tower. When eleven days had passed and Benjamin's turn came, he saw a flag put out. It was not white, but blood red, to warn them that they were to die.

When the brothers learned this they were angry and said, "Shall we suffer death because of a girl? We swear revenge. Wherever we find a girl we will shed her blood."

Then they went deeper into the wood, and in the middle where it was darkest they found a little enchanted house standing empty.

Then they said, "Here will we dwell. And you, Benjamin, the youngest and weakest, shall stay at home and keep house. We others will go abroad and find food."

Then they went into the wood and caught hares, wild does, birds and pigeons, and whatever else is good to eat, and brought them to Benjamin for him to prepare and cook to satisfy their hunger. So they lived together in the little house for ten years and the time did not seem long.

By this time the Queen's little daughter was growing up. She had a kind heart and a beautiful face, and a golden star on her forehead.

Once when there was a great wash she saw among the clothes twelve shirts, and she asked her mother, "Whose are these? They are too small to be my father's."

Then the mother answered with a sore heart, "Dear child, they belong to your twelve brothers."

The little girl said, "Where are my twelve brothers? I have never heard of them."

And her mother answered, "God only knows where they are wandering about in the world." Then she led the little girl to the secret room, and unlocked it and showed her the twelve coffins with the shavings and little pillows.

"These coffins," said she, "were intended for your twelve brothers, but they went away far from home when you were born." And she related how everything had come to pass.

Then said the little girl, "Dear mother, do not weep. I will go and seek my brothers."

So she took the twelve shirts and went far and wide in the great forest. The day sped on, and in the evening she came to the enchanted house.

She went in and found a youth, who asked, "Whence do you come, and what do you want?" He marveled at her beauty, her royal garments, and the star on her forehead.

Then she answered, "I am a king's daughter and I seek my twelve brothers. I will go everywhere under the blue sky until I find them." And she showed him the twelve shirts which belonged to them.

Then Benjamin saw that it must be his sister and said, "I am Benjamin, your youngest brother."

And she began weeping for joy, and Benjamin also, and they kissed and cheered each other with great love.

After a while he said, "Dear sister, there is still a hindrance. We have sworn that any maiden whom we meet must die, as it was because of a maiden that we had to leave our kingdom."

Then she said, "I will willingly die, if by doing so I may benefit my twelve brothers."

"No," answered he, "you shall not die. Sit down under this tub until the eleven brothers get home and we come to an agreement about it." She did so, and as night came on they returned from hunting, and supper was ready.

And as they were sitting at table and eating, they asked, "What news?"

And Benjamin said, "Don't you know any?"

"No," answered they.

So he said, "You have been in the wood and I have stayed at home, and yet I know more than you."

"Tell us!" cried they.

He answered, "Promise me that the first maiden we see shall not be put to death."

"Yes, we promise," cried they all. "She shall have mercy. Tell us now."

Then he said, "Our sister is here." He lifted up the tub and the King's daughter came forth in her royal garments with her golden star on her forehead, and she seemed so beautiful, delicate, and sweet that they all rejoiced. And they fell on her neck and kissed her and loved her with all their hearts.

After this she remained in the house with Benjamin and helped him with the work. The others went forth into the woods to catch wild animals, does, birds, and pigeons for food for them all, and their sister and Benjamin took care that all was made ready for them. She fetched the wood for cooking, and the vegetables, and watched the pots on the fire, so that supper was always ready when the others came in. She also kept great order in the house, and the beds were always beautifully white and clean, and the brothers were contented and lived in unity.

One day the two got ready a fine feast, and when they were all assembled they sat down and ate and drank, and were full of joy. Now there was a little garden belonging to the enchanted house, in which grew twelve lilies. The maiden, thinking to please her brothers, went out to gather the twelve flowers, meaning to give one to each as they sat at meat. But as she broke off the flowers, the brothers were changed into twelve ravens and flew over the wood far away, and the house with the garden also disappeared. So the poor maiden stood alone in the wildwood.

And as she was looking around her she saw an old woman standing by her who said, "My child, what hast thou done? Why couldst thou not leave the twelve flowers standing? They were thy twelve brothers, who are now changed to ravens forever."

The maiden said, weeping, "Is there no means of setting them free?"

"No," said the old woman. "There is in the whole world no way but one, and that is difficult. Thou canst not release them but by being dumb for seven years. Thou must neither speak nor laugh, and wert thou to speak one single word, and it wanted but one hour of the seven years, all would be in vain. Thy brothers would perish because of that one word."

Then the maiden said in her heart, "I am quite sure that I can set my brothers free." And she went and sought a tall tree, climbed up, and sat there spinning, and never spoke or laughed.

Now it happened that a king who was hunting in the wood had with him a large greyhound, who ran to the tree where the maiden was, sprang up at it, and barked loudly. Up came the King and saw the beautiful Princess with the golden star on her forehead, and he was so charmed with her beauty that he prayed her to become his wife. She gave no answer, only a little nod of her head. Then he himself climbed the tree and brought her down, set her on his horse, and took her home. The wedding was held with great splendor and rejoicing, but the bride neither spoke nor laughed.

After they had lived pleasantly together for a few years, the King's mother, who was a wicked woman, began to slander the young Queen, and said to the King, "She is only a low beggar maid that you have

taken to yourself. Who knows what mean tricks she is playing? Even if she is really dumb and cannot speak she might at least laugh. Not to laugh is the sign of a bad conscience."

At first the King would believe nothing of it, but the old woman talked so long and suggested so many bad things that he at last let himself be persuaded and condemned the Queen to death.

Now a great fire was kindled in the courtyard, and she was to be burned in it. And the King stood above at the window and watched it all with weeping eyes, for he had held her very dear. And when she was already bound fast to the stake and the fire was licking her garments with red tongues, the last moment of the seven years ended.

Then a rushing sound was heard in the air and twelve ravens came flying and sank downwards. And as they touched the earth they became her twelve lost brothers. They rushed through the fire and quenched the flames and set their dear sister free, kissing and consoling her.

And now that her mouth was opened and she might venture to speak, she told the King the reason of her dumbness and why she had never laughed. The King rejoiced when he heard of her innocence, and they all lived together in happiness until their death. But the wicked mother-in-law was very unhappy, and died miserably.

THE MOUSE, THE BIRD, AND THE SAUSAGE

ONCE UPON a time a mouse and a bird and a sausage lived and kept house together in perfect peace among themselves, and in great prosperity. It was the bird's business to fly to the forest every day and bring back wood. The mouse had to draw the water, make the fire, and set the table. And the sausage had to do the cooking. Nobody is content in this world: much will have more. One day the bird met another bird on the way, and told him of his excellent condition in life. But the other bird called him a poor simpleton to do so much work while the two others led easy lives at home.

When the mouse had made up her fire and drawn water, she went to rest in her little room until it was time to lay the cloth. The sausage stayed by the saucepans, looked to it that the victuals were well cooked, and just before dinnertime he stirred the broth or the stew three or four times well around himself, so as to enrich and season and flavor it. Then the bird used to come home and lay down his load, and they sat down to table; and after a good meal they would go to bed and

sleep their fill till the next morning. It really was a most satisfactory life.

But the bird came to the resolution next day never again to fetch wood. He had, he said, been their slave long enough. Now they must change about and make a new arrangement. So in spite of all the mouse and the sausage could say, the bird was determined to have his own way. So they drew lots to settle it, and as the lot fell, the sausage was to fetch wood, the mouse was to cook, and the bird was to draw water and make the fire.

Now see what happened. The sausage went away after wood, the bird made up the fire, and the mouse put on the pot, and they waited until the sausage should come home, bringing the wood for the next day. But the sausage was absent so long that they thought something must have happened to him, and the bird went part of the way to see if he could see anything of him. Not far off he met a dog on the road, who, looking upon the sausage as lawful prey, had picked him up and made an end of him. The bird then lodged a complaint against the dog as an open and flagrant robber, but it was all no good, as the dog declared that he had found forged letters upon the sausage, so that he deserved to lose his life.

The bird then very sadly took up the wood and carried it home himself, and related to the mouse all he had seen and heard. They were both very troubled, but determined to look on the bright side of things and still to remain together. And so the bird laid the cloth, and the mouse prepared the food and finally got into the pot, as the sausage used to do, to stir and flavor the broth, but then she had to part with fur and skin and finally with life!

And when the bird came to dish up the dinner, there was no cook to be seen. And he turned over the heap of wood, and looked and looked, but the cook never appeared again. By accident the wood caught fire, and the bird hastened to fetch water to put it out, but he let fall the bucket in the well and himself after it, and as he could not get out again he was obliged to be drowned.

THE WOLF AND THE SEVEN GOATS

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THERE WAS once an old nanny goat who had seven kids, and she was just as fond of them as a mother is of her children. One day she was going into the woods to fetch some food for them, so she called

them all up to her and said, "My dear children, I am going out into the woods. Beware of the wolf! If once he gets into the house, he will eat you up—skin, and hair, and all. The rascal often disguises himself, but you will know him by his rough voice and his black feet."

The kids said, "Oh, we will be very careful, dear mother. You may be quite happy about us."

Bleating tenderly, the old goat went off to her work. Before long, someone knocked at the door and cried, "Open the door, dear children! Your mother has come back and brought something for each of you."

But the kids knew quite well by the voice that it was the wolf. "We won't open the door," they cried. "You are not our mother. She has a soft, gentle voice, but yours is rough, and we are quite sure that you are the wolf."

So he went away to a shop and bought a lump of chalk, which he ate, and it made his voice quite soft.

He went back, knocked at the door again, and cried, "Open the door, dear children. Your mother has come back and brought something for each of you."

But the wolf had put one of his paws on the window sill, where the kids saw it, and they cried, "We won't open the door. Our mother has not got a black foot as you have. You are the wolf."

Then the wolf ran to a baker and said, "I have bruised my foot. Please put some dough on it." And when the baker had put some dough on his foot, he ran to the miller and said, "Strew some flour on my foot."

The miller thought, "The old wolf is going to take somebody in," and refused.

But the wolf said, "If you don't do it, I will eat you up." So the miller was frightened, and whitened his paws. People are like that, you know.

Now the wretch went for the third time to the door, and knocked and said, "Open the door, children. Your dear mother has come home and has brought something for each of you out of the wood."

The kids cried, "Show us your feet first, so that we may be sure you are our mother."

He put his paws on the window sill, and when they saw that they were white they believed all he said and opened the door.

Alas, it was the wolf who walked in. They were terrified and tried to hide themselves. One ran under the table, the second jumped into bed, the third into the oven. The fourth ran into the kitchen, the fifth got into the cupboard, the sixth into the washtub, and the seventh hid in the tall clockcase. But the wolf found them all but one and made short work of them. He swallowed one after the other, except the youngest

one in the clockcase, whom he did not find. When he had satisfied his appetite he took himself off and lay down in a meadow, where he soon fell asleep.

Not long afterwards the old nanny goat came back from the woods. Oh, what a terrible sight met her eyes! The house door was wide open. Tables, chairs, and benches were overturned. The washing bowl was smashed to atoms, the covers and pillows torn from the bed. She searched all over the house for her children, but nowhere were they to be found. She called them by name, one by one, but no one answered.

At last when she came to the youngest, a tiny voice cried, "I am here, dear mother, hidden in the clockcase."

She brought him out and he told her that the wolf had come and eaten all the others. You may imagine how she wept over her children.

At last in her grief she went out, and the youngest kid ran by her side. When they went into the meadow, there lay the wolf under a tree, making the branches shake with his snores. They examined him from every side, and they could plainly see movements within his distended body.

"Ah, heavens!" thought the goat, "is it possible that my poor children, whom he has eaten, should be still alive?"

She sent the kid running to the house to fetch scissors, needles, and thread. Then she cut a hole in the monster's side, and hardly had she begun when a kid popped out its head. And as soon as the hole was big enough, all six jumped out, one after the other—all alive and without having suffered the least injury, for in his greed the monster had swallowed them whole. You may imagine the mother's joy! She hugged them and skipped about like a tailor on his wedding day.

At last she said, "Go and fetch some big stones, children, and we will fill the brute's body while he sleeps."

Then the seven kids brought a lot of stones as fast as they could carry them, and stuffed the wolf with them till he could hold no more. The old mother quickly sewed him up, without his having noticed anything or even moved.

At last when the wolf had had his sleep out he got up, and as the stones made him feel very thirsty he wanted to go to a spring to drink. But as soon as he moved, the stones began to roll about and rattle inside him. Then he cried.

*"What's the rumbling and tumbling
That sets my stomach grumbling?
I thought 'twas six kids, flesh, and bones,
Now I find it's nought but rolling stones."*

When he reached the spring and stooped over the water to drink, the heavy stones dragged him down, and he was drowned miserably.

When the seven kids saw what had happened, they came running up and cried aloud, "The wolf is dead! The wolf is dead!" And they and their mother capered and danced around the spring in their joy.

JORINDA AND JORINGEL

THERE WAS once an old castle in the middle of a vast thick wood. In it there lived an old woman quite alone, and she was a witch. By day she made herself into a cat or a screech owl, but regularly at night she became a human being again. In this way she was able to decoy wild beasts and birds, which she would kill and boil or roast. If any man came within a hundred paces of the castle, he was forced to stand still; he could not move from the place till she gave the word of release. But if an innocent maiden came within the circle, she changed her into a bird and shut her up in a cage, which she carried into a room in the castle. She must have had seven thousand cages of this kind, all containing pretty birds.

Now there was once a maiden called Jorinda who was more beautiful than all other maidens. She had promised to marry a very handsome youth named Joringel, and it was in the days of their courtship, when they took the greatest joy in being alone together, that one day they wandered out into the forest. "Take care," said Joringel. "Do not let us go too near the castle."

It was a lovely evening. The sunshine glanced between the tree trunks of the dark greenwood, while the turtledoves sang plaintively in the old beech trees. Yet Jorinda sat down in the sunshine and could not help weeping and bewailing, while Joringel, too, soon became just as mournful. They both felt as miserable as if they had been going to die. Gazing around them, they found they had lost their way and did not know how they should find the path home. Half the sun still appeared above the mountain; half had sunk below.

Joringel peered into the bushes and saw the old walls of the castle quite close to them. He was terror-stricken and became pale as death. Jorinda was singing:

*"My birdie with its ring so red
Sings sorrow, sorrow, sorrow;
My love will mourn when I am dead,
Tomorrow, morrow, mor—jug, jug."*

Joringel looked toward her, but she had changed into a nightingale who sang "Jug, jug." A screech owl with glowing eyes flew three times around her, and cried three times "Shu hu-hu." Joringel could not stir. He stood like a stone without being able to speak or cry, or to move hand or foot.

The sun had now set. The owl flew into a bush, out of which appeared almost at the same moment a crooked old woman, skinny and yellow. She had big red eyes and a crooked nose whose tip reached her chin. She mumbled something, caught the nightingale, and carried it away in her hand. Joringel could not say a word nor move from the spot, and the nightingale was gone.

At last the old woman came back, and said in a droning voice, "Greetings to thee, Zachiel! When the moon shines on the cage, unloose the captive, Zachiel."

Then Joringel was free. He fell on his knees before the witch and implored her to give back his Jorinda, but she said he should never have her again, and went away. He pleaded, he wept, he lamented, but all in vain. "Alas! What is to become of me?" said Joringel.

At last he went away, and arrived at a strange village where he spent a long time as a shepherd. He often wandered around about the castle, but did not go too near it. At last he dreamt one night that he found a blood-red flower in the middle of which was a beautiful large pearl. He plucked the flower and took it to the castle. Whatever he touched with it was made free of enchantment. He dreamt also that by this means he had found his Jorinda again.

In the morning when he awoke, he began to search over hill and dale in the hope of finding a flower like this. He searched till the ninth day, when he found the flower early in the morning. In the middle was a big dewdrop, as big as the finest pearl. This flower he carried day and night till he reached the castle. He was not held fast as before when he came within the hundred paces of the castle, but walked straight up to the door.

Joringel was filled with joy. He touched the door with the flower, and it flew open. He went in through the court and listened for the sound of birds. He went on and found the hall, where the witch was feeding the birds in the seven thousand cages. When she saw Joringel she was angry, very angry. She scolded him and spat poison and gall at him. He paid no attention to her but turned away and searched among the bird cages. Yes, there were many hundred nightingales, but how was he to find his Jorinda?

While he was looking about in this way he noticed that the old woman was secretly removing a cage with a bird inside, and was making for the door. He sprang swiftly towards her, touched the cage and the witch

with the flower, and then she no longer had power to exercise her spells. Jorinda stood there, as beautiful as before, and threw her arms around Joringel's neck.

After that he changed all the other birds back into maidens again and went home with Jorinda, and they lived long and happily together.

THE THREE SPINNING FAIRIES

THERE WAS once upon a time a girl who was lazy and hated work, and nothing her mother could say would induce her to spin. At last the mother grew angry and, losing all patience with her, gave her a beating. At this the girl began to cry so loudly that the Queen, who was driving past at the time, heard her cries and stopped.

She went into the house and asked the mother why she was beating her daughter like that. "Her screams," she said, "can be heard outside in the street."

The mother was ashamed to confess the truth about her daughter's laziness, and so she answered, "I cannot get her to leave off spinning! She is forever at her wheel, and I am too poor to keep on buying her fresh flax."

"Is that all?" said the Queen. "There is nothing I like so much as the sound of spinning. I am never happier than when I can hear the humming of the wheels. Let me have your daughter and I will take her home with me to the castle. I have plenty of flax and she can go on spinning there to her heart's content."

The mother was heartily pleased at this proposal and so the Queen left, taking the girl with her. On their arrival at the castle, she took her upstairs and showed her three rooms filled from floor to ceiling with the most beautiful flax.

"Spin me all this," said the Queen, "and when it is finished, you shall have my eldest son for your husband. Your poverty is a matter of no consequence to me, for I consider that your unremitting industry is an all-sufficient dowry."

The girl dared not say anything but she inwardly trembled with fear, for she knew that she could never spin all that flax even if she were to sit at her spinning wheel from morning till night for three hundred years. As soon as she was alone she began to weep, and she sat like that for three days without doing a stroke of work.

When the Queen came again on the third day, she was surprised to find that the flax had not been touched. The girl excused herself by say-

ing that she had felt so lonely and homesick that she had not been able to begin her spinning. The Queen was satisfied with this excuse, but as she was leaving she said, "Tomorrow, mind, I shall expect you to begin your work."

Alone once more, the girl was at her wit's end to know what to do, and in her distress of mind went and looked out of the window. There she saw three funny-looking women coming towards her. One had a big flat foot, another had a large underlip that hung over her chin, and the third had a very broad thumb. They stood still under the window and, looking up, they asked the girl what was the matter. She told them her trouble, and they offered to help her.

"If you will invite us to your wedding," they said, "and will not be ashamed of us, but will introduce us as your cousins and let us sit at your table, we will soon spin all that flax for you."

"That I will gladly promise," said the girl, "if you will but come in and begin working for me at once."

So she let in the three women, and what queer little figures they looked! She cleared a space for them in the first room, and they all sat down and began spinning. The first drew out the thread and turned the wheel, and the second moistened the thread. The third twisted it, striking with her fingers on the table; and every time she did this a beautiful skein of the finest spun yarn fell on the ground.

Whenever the Queen came, the girl hid the three women and then showed her skarn upon skein of spun yarn, till the Queen did not know how to find words enough to praise her.

As soon as the first room was empty, the spinners went on to the second, and finally they went on to the third, which like the others was very quickly cleared of the flax. Then the three women took leave of the girl, saying to her as they parted, "Do not forget the promise you made us, for it will bring you good fortune."

When the Queen was shown the empty rooms and the great piles of yarn, she began at once to make preparations for the wedding. The bridegroom was delighted to think he should have such a clever and industrious wife, and showered his praises upon her.

"I have three cousins," said the girl, "and they have shown me such great kindness in the past that I should not like to forget them, now that I am happy and prosperous. Will you give me permission to invite them to the wedding, and allow them to sit at our table?" The Queen and the bridegroom both willingly consented to this request.

The wedding feast was beginning when in walked the three women, attired in the most wonderful dresses. The bride greeted them and said, "Welcome, dear cousins," but the bridegroom could not help exclaiming, "How came you to have such ugly friends?"

Then he went up to the first and asked her what had given her such a broad foot.

"Turning the wheel," she answered.

Then he went to the second and asked what had caused her to have such a large lip.

"Moistening the thread," she answered.

Then he went to the third and asked what made her thumb so broad.

"Twisting the thread," she answered.

"Then," cried the Prince, horrified at these answers, "my beautiful wife shall never go near a spinning wheel again as long as she lives." And so henceforth she was rid of the hated task of spinning.

SWEETHEART ROLAND

ONCE UPON a time there was a woman who was a real witch, and she had two daughters. One was ugly and wicked, but she loved her because she was her own daughter. The other was good and lovely, but she hated her for she was only her foster child.

Now this foster child had a beautiful apron which the other daughter envied, and she said to her mother that she must and would have it.

"Just wait quietly, my child," said her mother. "You shall have it. Tonight when she is asleep I will go and chop off your sister's head. Only take care to lie on the farther side of the bed, against the wall, and push her well to this side."

Now all this would certainly have come to pass if the poor girl had not been standing in a corner and heard what they said. She was not even allowed to go near the door all day, and when bedtime came the witch's daughter got into bed first, so as to lie at the farther side. But when she was asleep the other gently changed places with her and put herself next the wall.

In the middle of the night the witch crept in, holding an ax in her right hand, while with her left she felt to find if anyone was there. Then she seized the ax with both hands, struck—and struck off her own child's head.

When she had gone away, the maiden got up and went to the house of her sweetheart, Roland, and knocked at his door. When he came out, she said to him, "Listen, dear Roland, we must quickly fly. My foster mother tried to kill me, but she hit her own child instead. When day comes and she sees what she has done, we shall be lost."



"But," said Roland, "you must first get her magic wand, or we shall not be able to escape if she comes after us."

The maiden fetched the magic wand, and then she took her foster sister's head and dropped three drops of blood from it—one by the bed, one in the kitchen, and one on the stairs. After that, she hurried away with her sweetheart, Roland.

When the old witch got up in the morning she called her daughter in order to give her the apron, but she did not come. Then she called, "Where art thou?"

"Here on the stairs," answered one drop of blood.

The witch went to the stairs but saw nothing. So she called again "Where art thou?"

"Here in the kitchen warming myself," answered the second drop of blood.

The witch went into the kitchen but found nothing. Then she called again, "Where art thou?"

"Here in bed, sleeping," answered the third drop of blood.

So she went into the bedroom, and there she found her own child, whose head she had chopped off herself.

The witch flew into a violent passion and sprang out of the window. As she could see for many miles around, she discovered the maiden hurrying away with Roland.

"That won't do you any good!" she cried. "However far you may go, you won't escape me."

She put on her seven-league boots, and before long she overtook them. When the maiden saw her coming, with the magic wand she changed her sweetheart into a lake, and changed herself into a duck swimming in it. The witch stood on the shore and threw bread crumbs into the water, and did everything she could think of to entice the duck ashore. But it was all to no purpose, and she was obliged to go back at night without having accomplished her object.

When she had gone away, the maiden and Roland resumed their own shapes, and they walked the whole night till break of day.

Then the maiden changed herself into a beautiful rose in the middle of a briar hedge, and Roland into a fiddler. Before long the witch came striding along and said to the fiddler, "Good fiddler, may I pick this beautiful rose?"

"By all means," he said, "and I will play to you."

As she crept into the hedge in great haste to pick the flower (for she knew well who the flower was), Roland began to play. And she had to dance, whether she liked or not, for it was a magic dance. The faster he played, the higher she had to jump, and the thorns tore her clothes to

ribbons and scratched her till she bled. He would not stop a moment, so she had to dance till she fell down dead.

When the maiden was freed from the spell, Roland said, "Now I will go to my father and order the wedding."

"Then I will stay here in the meantime," said the maiden. "And so that no one shall recognize me while I am waiting, I will change myself into a common stone."

So Roland went away and the maiden stayed in the field as a stone, waiting his return.

But when Roland reached home he fell into the snares of another woman, who made him forget all about his love. The poor maiden waited a long, long time, but when he did not come back, she became very sad and changed herself into a flower. "Somebody at least will tread upon me," she thought.

Now it so happened that a shepherd was watching his sheep in the field, and he saw the flower and picked it because he thought it was so pretty. He took it home and put it carefully away in a chest. From that time forward a wonderful change took place in the shepherd's hut. When he got up in the morning, all the work was done. The tables and benches were dusted, the fire was lighted, and the water was carried in. At dinnertime, when he came home, the table was laid and a well-cooked meal stood ready. He could not imagine how it all came about, for he never saw a creature in his house, and nobody could be hidden in the tiny hut. He was much pleased at being so well served, but at last he got rather frightened and went to a wise woman to ask her advice.

The wise woman said, "There is magic behind it. You must look carefully about the room early in the morning, and whatever you see, throw a white cloth over it and the spell will be broken."

The shepherd did what she told him, and next morning just as the day broke he saw his chest open and the flower come out. So he sprang up quickly and threw a white cloth over it. Immediately the spell was broken and a lovely maiden stood before him, who confessed that she had been the flower and that it was she who had done all the work of his hut. She also told him her story, and he was so pleased with her that he asked her to marry him.

But she answered, "No, I want my sweetheart Roland. Though he has forsaken me I will always be true to him."

She promised not to go away, however, but to go on with the house-keeping for the present.

Now the time came for Roland's marriage to be celebrated. According to old custom, a proclamation was made that every maiden in the

land should present herself to sing at the marriage in honor of the bridal pair.

When the faithful maiden heard this she grew very sad, so sad that she thought her heart would break. She had no wish to go to the wedding but the others came and fetched her. But each time as her turn came to sing, she slipped behind the others till she was the only one left and she could not help herself.

As soon as she began to sing and her voice reached Roland's ears, he sprang up and cried, "That is the true bride and I will have no other."

Everything that he had forgotten came back, and his heart was filled with joy. So the faithful maiden was married to her sweetheart, Roland. All her grief and pain were over, and only happiness lay before her.

THE THREE CHILDREN OF FORTUNE

ONCE UPON a time a father sent for his three sons and gave to the eldest a cock, to the second a scythe, and to the third a cat.

"I am now old," said he. "My end is approaching, and I would fain provide for you before I die. Money I have none, and what I give you seems of but little worth. It rests with yourselves alone to turn my gifts to good account. Only seek out a land where what you have is still unknown, and your fortune is made."

After the death of the father, the eldest set out with his cock. But wherever he went, in every town he saw from afar off a cock sitting upon the church steeple and turning round with the wind. In the villages he always heard plenty of them crowing, and his bird was therefore nothing new. So there did not seem much chance of his making his fortune.

At length it happened that he came to an island where the people who lived there had never heard of a cock, and knew not even how to reckon the time. They knew, indeed, if it were morning or evening, but at night, if they lay awake, they had no means of knowing how time went.

"Behold," said he to them, "what a noble animal this is! How like a knight he is! He carries a bright red crest upon his head and spurs upon his heels. He crows three times every night at stated hours, and at the third time the sun is about to rise. But this is not all. Sometimes he screams in broad daylight, and then you must take warning, for the weather is surely about to change.

This pleased the natives mightily. They kept awake one whole night and heard to their great joy how gloriously the cock called the hour at two, four, and six o'clock. Then they asked him whether the bird was for sale, and how much he would sell it for.

"About as much gold as an ass can carry," said he.

"A very fair price for such an animal," cried they with one voice, and they agreed to give him what he asked.

When he returned home with his wealth, his brothers wondered greatly, and the second said, "I will now set forth likewise and see if I can turn my scythe to as good an account."

There did not seem, however, much likelihood of this, for go where he would, he was met by peasants who had as good scythes on their shoulders as he had. But at last, as good luck would have it, he came to an island where the people had never heard of a scythe. There, as soon as the corn was ripe they went into the fields and pulled it up, but this was very hard work and a great deal of it was lost. The man then set to work with his scythe, and he mowed down their whole crop so quickly that the people stood staring openmouthed with wonder. They were willing to give him what he asked for such a marvelous thing, but he only took a horse laden with as much gold as it could carry.

Now the third brother had a great longing to go and see what he could make of his cat. So he set out, and at first it happened to him as it had to the others. So long as he kept upon the mainland he met with no success. There were plenty of cats everywhere—indeed too many—so that most of the young ones were drowned in the water as soon as they came into the world.

At last he passed over to an island, where, as it chanced most luckily for him, nobody had ever seen a cat. And they were overrun with mice to such a degree that the little wretches danced upon the tables and chairs, whether the master of the house was at home or not. The people complained loudly of this grievance. The King knew not how to rid himself of them in his palace. In every corner mice were squeaking, and they gnawed everything that their teeth could lay hold of.

Here was a fine field for puss! She soon began her chase, and had cleared two rooms in the twinkling of an eye. The people then besought their king to buy the wonderful animal at any price, for the good of the public. The King willingly gave what was asked—a mule laden with gold and jewels. And thus the third brother returned home with a richer prize than each of the others.

Meantime the cat feasted away upon the mice in the royal palace and devoured so many that they were no longer in any great numbers. At length, quite spent and tired with her work, she became extremely thirsty. So she stood still, drew up her head, and cried, "Miau, Miau!"

The King gathered together all his subjects when they heard this strange cry, and many ran shrieking in a great fright out of the palace. But the King held a council to decide what was best to be done. It was at length decided to send a herald to the cat, to warn her to leave the castle forthwith, or else force would be used to remove her.

"For," said the counselors, "we would far more willingly put up with the mice—since we are used to that evil—than get rid of them at the risk of our lives."

A page accordingly went and asked the cat whether she was willing to quit the castle. But puss, whose thirst became every moment more and more pressing, answered nothing but "Miau! Miau!"

The page interpreted this to mean "No! No!" and therefore carried this answer to the King.

"Well," said the counselors, "then we must try what force will do."

So the guns were planted and the palace was fired upon from all sides. When the fire reached the room where the cat was, she sprang out of the window and ran away, but the besiegers did not see her and went on firing until the whole palace was burnt to the ground.

THE GOOSE GIRL

THERE WAS once an old queen whose husband had been dead for many years, and she had a very beautiful daughter. When she grew up she was betrothed to a prince in a distant country. When the time came for the maiden to be sent into this distant country to be married, the old Queen packed up quantities of clothes and jewels, gold and silver, cups and ornaments, and in fact everything suitable to a royal outfit, for she loved her daughter very dearly.

She also sent a waiting-woman to travel with her and to put her hand into that of the bridegroom. They each had a horse. The Princess' horse was called Falada, and it could speak.

When the hour of departure came, the old Queen went to her bedroom and with a sharp little knife cut her finger and made it bleed. Then she held a piece of white cambric under it and let three drops of blood fall on it. This cambric she gave to her daughter and said, "Dear child, take good care of this. It will stand you in good stead on the journey."

They then bade each other a sorrowful farewell. The Princess hid the piece of cambric in her bosom, mounted her horse, and set out to her bridegroom's country.

When they had ridden for a time, the Princess became very thirsty

and said to the waiting-woman, "Get down and fetch me some water in my cup from the stream. I must have something to drink."

"If you are thirsty," said the waiting-woman, "dismount yourself, lie down by the water, and drink. I don't choose to be your servant."

So in her great thirst the Princess dismounted and stooped down to the stream and drank, since she could not have her golden cup. The poor Princess said, "Alas!" And the drops of blood answered, "If your mother knew this it would break her heart."

The royal bride was humble, so she said nothing, but mounted her horse again. Then they rode several miles further, but the day was warm, the sun was scorching, and the Princess was soon very thirsty again.

When they reached a river she called out again to her waiting-woman, "Get down and give me some water in my golden cup." She had forgotten all about the rude words which had been said to her.

But the waiting-woman answered more haughtily than ever, "If you want to drink, get the water for yourself. I won't be your servant."

Being very thirsty, the Princess dismounted and knelt by the flowing water. She cried, "Ah me!" And the drops of blood answered, "If your mother knew this it would break her heart."

While she stooped over the water to drink, the piece of cambric with the drops of blood on it fell out of her bosom and floated away on the stream, but she never noticed this in her great fear. The waiting-woman, however, had seen it and rejoiced at getting more power over the bride, who by losing the drops of blood had become weak and powerless.

Now when she was about to mount her horse Falada again, the waiting-woman said, "By rights, Falada belongs to me. This jade will do for you!"

The poor little Princess was obliged to give way. Then the waiting-woman in a harsh voice ordered her to take off her royal robes, and to put on her own mean garments. Finally she forced her to swear before heaven that she would not tell a creature at the court what had taken place. Had she not taken the oath she would have been killed on the spot. But Falada saw all this and marked it.

The waiting-woman mounted Falada and put the real bride on her poor jade, and they continued their journey.

There was great rejoicing when they arrived at the castle. The Prince hurried towards them and lifted the waiting-woman from her horse, thinking that she was his bride. She was led upstairs, but the real Princess had to stay below.

The old King looked out of the window and saw the delicate, pretty little creature standing in the courtyard. So he went to the bridal apart-

ment and asked the bride about her companion who was left standing in the courtyard, and wished to know who she was.

"I picked her up on the way and brought her with me for company. Give the girl something to do to keep her from idling."

But the old King had no work for her and could not think of anything. At last he said, "I have a little lad who looks after the geese. She may help him."

The boy was called little Conrad, and the real bride was sent with him to look after the geese.

Soon afterwards, the false bride said to the Prince, "Dear husband, I pray you do me a favor."

He answered, "That will I gladly do."

"Well then, let the knacker be called to cut off the head of the horse I rode. It angered me on the way."

Really she was afraid that the horse would speak and tell of her treatment of the Princess. So it was settled, and the faithful Falada had to die.

When this came to the ear of the real Princess, she promised the knacker a piece of gold if he would do her a slight service. There was a great dark gateway to the town, through which she had to pass every morning and evening. Would he nail up Falada's head in this gateway so that she might see him as she passed?

The knacker promised to do as she wished, and when the horse's head was cut off he hung it up in the dark gateway. In the early morning, when she and Conrad went through the gateway, she said in passing:

"Alas! dear Falada, there thou hangest."

And the head answered:

*"Alas! Queen's daughter, there thou gangest.
If thy mother knew thy fate,
Her heart would break with grief so great."*

Then they passed on out of the town and right into the fields with the geese. When they reached the meadow, the Princess sat down on the grass and let down her hair. It shone like pure gold, and when little Conrad saw it he was so delighted that he wanted to pluck some out. But she said:

*"Blow, blow, little breeze,
And Conrad's hat seize.
Let him join in the chase
While away it is whirled,
Till my tresses are curled
And I rest in my place."*

Then a strong wind sprang up which blew away Conrad's hat right over the fields, and he had to run after it. When he came back, she had finished combing her hair and it was all put up again, so he could not get a single hair. This made him very sulky and he would not say another word to her. And they tended the geese till evening, when they went home.

Next morning when they passed under the gateway, the Princess said:

"Alas! dear Falada, there thou hangest."

Falada answered:

*"Alas! Queen's daughter, there thou gangest.
If thy mother knew thy fate,
Her heart would break with grief so great."*

Again when they reached the meadows, the Princess undid her hair and began combing it. Conrad ran to pluck some out, but she said quickly:

*"Blow, blow, little breeze,
And Conrad's hat seize.
Let him join in the chase
While away it is whirled,
Till my tresses are curled
And I rest in my place."*

The wind again sprang up and blew Conrad's hat far away over the fields, and he had to run after it. When he came back, the hair was all put up again and he could not pull out a single hair. And they tended the geese till the evening.

When they got home Conrad went to the old King and said, "I won't tend the geese with that maiden again."

"Why not?" asked the King.

"Oh, she vexes me every day."

The old King then ordered him to tell what she did to vex him.

Conrad said, "In the morning when we pass under the dark gateway with the geese, she talks to a horse's head which is hung up on the wall. She says:

Alas! Falada, there thou hangest.

And the head answers:

*Alas! Queen's daughter, there thou gangest.
If thy mother knew thy fate,
Her heart would break with grief so great."*

Then Conrad went on to tell the King all that had happened in the meadow, and how he had to run after his hat in the wind.

The old King ordered Conrad to go out next day as usual. Then he placed himself behind the dark gateway and heard the Princess speaking to Falada's head. He also followed her into the field and hid himself behind a bush. And with his own eyes he saw the Goose Girl and the lad come driving the geese into the field. Then after a time he saw the girl let down her hair, which glittered in the sun. Directly after this, she said:

*"Blow, blow little breeze,
And Conrad's hat seize.
Let him join in the chase
While away it is whirled,
Till my tresses are curled
And I rest in my place."*

Then came a puff of wind which carried off Conrad's hat, and he had to run after it. While he was away, the maiden combed and did up her hair, and all this the old King observed. Thereupon he went away unnoticed, and in the evening when the Goose Girl came home, he called her aside and asked why she did all these things.

"I may not tell you that, nor may I tell any human creature, for I have sworn it under the open sky. If I had not done so, I should have lost my life."

He pressed her sorely and gave her no peace, but he could get nothing out of her. Then he said, "If you won't tell me, then tell your sorrows to the iron stove there." And he went away.

She crept up to the stove and, beginning to weep and lament, unburdened her heart to it and said, "Here I am, forsaken by all the world, and yet I am a princess. A false waiting-woman brought me to such a pass that I had to take off my royal robes. Then she took my place with my bridegroom, while I have to do mean service as a goose girl. If my mother knew it, it would break her heart."

The old King stood outside by the pipes of the stove and heard all that she said. Then he came back and told her to go away from the stove. He caused royal robes to be put upon her, and her beauty was a marvel. The old King called his son and told him that he had a false bride—she was only a waiting-woman, but the true bride was here, the so-called Goose Girl.

The young Prince was charmed with her youth and beauty. A great banquet was prepared to which all the courtiers and good friends were bidden. The bridegroom sat at the head of the table with the Princess on one side and the waiting-woman at the other, but she was dazzled and did not recognize the Princess in her brilliant apparel.

When they had eaten and drunk and were all very merry, the old King put a riddle to the waiting-woman. "What does a person deserve who deceives his master?" Then he told the whole story and ended by asking, "What doom does he deserve?"

The false bride answered, "No better than this: he must be put stark naked into a barrel stuck with nails, and be dragged along by two white horses from street to street till he is dead."

"That is your own doom!" said the King, "and the judgment shall be carried out."

When the sentence was fulfilled, the young Prince married his true bride, and they ruled their kingdom together in peace and happiness.

THE CAT AND MOUSE IN PARTNERSHIP

A CAT, having made acquaintance with a mouse, professed such great love and friendship for her that the mouse at last agreed that they should live and keep house together.

"We must make provision for the winter," said the cat, "or we shall suffer hunger. And you, little mouse, must not stir out, or you will be caught in a trap."

So they took counsel together and bought a little pot of fat. Then they could not tell where to put it for safety, but after long consideration the cat said there could not be a better place than the church, for nobody would steal there. And they decided to put it under the altar and not touch it until they were really in want. So the little pot was placed in safety. But before long the cat was seized with a great desire to taste it.

"Listen to me, little mouse," said he. "I have been asked by my cousin to stand godfather to a little son she has brought into the world. He is white with brown spots, and they want to have the christening today. So let me go to it, and you stay at home and keep house."

"Oh yes, certainly," answered the mouse. "Pray go, by all means. And when you are feasting on all the good things, think of me. I should so like a drop of the sweet red wine."

But there was not a word of truth in all this. The cat had no cousin and had not been asked to stand godfather. He went to the church, straight up to the little pot, and licked the fat off the top. Then he took a walk over the roofs of the town, saw his acquaintances, stretched himself in the sun, and licked his whiskers as often as he thought of the little pot of fat. And then when it was evening he went home.

"Here you are at last," said the mouse. "I expect you have had a merry time."

"Oh, pretty well," answered the cat.

"And what name did you give the child?" asked the mouse.

"Top-off," answered the cat dryly.

"Top-off!" cried the mouse. "That is a singular and wonderful name. Is it common in your family?"

"What does it matter?" said the cat. "It's not any worse than Crumb-picker, like your godchild."

A little time after this the cat was again seized with a longing for the pot of fat.

"Again I must ask you," said he to the mouse, "to do me a favor and keep house alone for a day. I have been asked a second time to stand godfather, and as the little one has a white ring round its neck, I cannot well refuse."

So the kind little mouse consented, and the cat crept along by the town wall until he reached the church, where he went straight to the little pot of fat and ate half of it.

"Nothing tastes so well as what one keeps to oneself," said he, feeling quite content with his day's work. When he reached home, the mouse asked what name had been given to the child.

"Half-gone," answered the cat.

"Half-gone!" cried the mouse. "I never heard such a name in my life. I'll bet it's not to be found in the calendar."

Soon after that the cat's mouth began to water again for the fat.

"Good things always come in threes," said he to the mouse. "Again I have been asked to stand godfather. The little one is quite black with white feet, and not any white hair on its body. Such a thing does not happen every day, so you will let me go, won't you?"

"Top-off, Half-gone," murmured the mouse. "They are such curious names, I cannot but wonder at them."

"That's because you are always sitting at home," said the cat, "in your little gray frock and hairy tail, never seeing the world, and fancying all sorts of things."

So the little mouse cleaned up the house and set it all in order. Meanwhile the greedy cat went and made an end of the little pot of fat.

"Now all is finished one's mind will be easy," said he, and came home in the evening quite sleek and comfortable. The mouse asked at once what name had been given to the third child.

"It won't please you any better than the others," answered the cat. "It is called All-gone."

"All-gone!" cried the mouse. "What an unheard-of name! I never met with anything like it. All-gone! Whatever can it mean?" And shak-

ing her head, she curled herself round and went to sleep. After that the cat was not again asked to stand godfather.

When the winter had come and there was nothing more to be had out of doors, the mouse began to think of their store.

"Come, cat," said she, "we will fetch our pot of fat. How good it will taste, to be sure!"

"Of course it will," said the cat. "Just as good as if you stuck your tongue out of the window."

So they set out, and when they reached the place they found the pot, but it was standing empty.

"Oh, now I know what it all meant," cried the mouse. "Now I see what sort of partner you have been! Instead of standing godfather you have eaten it all up. First Top-off! Then Half-gone! Then—"

"Hold your tongue!" screamed the cat. "Another word, and I eat you too!"

And the poor little mouse, having "All-gone" on her tongue, out it came, and the cat leaped upon her and made an end of her. And that is the way of the world.

THE WHITE SNAKE

A LONG TIME ago there lived a king whose wisdom was celebrated far and wide. Nothing was unknown to him, and the news of the most secret transactions seemed to reach him through the air.

Now he had one very odd habit. Every day at dinner, when the courtiers had withdrawn and he was quite alone, a trusted servant had to bring in another dish. It was always covered. Even the servant did not know what it contained, nor anyone else, for the King never uncovered it till he was alone. This had gone on for a long time, when one day the servant who carried the dish was overcome by his curiosity and took the dish to his own room.

When he had carefully locked the door, he took the cover off the dish and saw a white snake in it. At the sight of it, he could not resist tasting it, so he cut a piece off and put it into his mouth. Hardly had he tasted it, however, when he heard a wonderful whispering of delicate voices.

He went to the window and listened, and he noticed that the whispers came from the sparrows outside. They were chattering away and telling each other all kinds of things that they had heard in the woods and fields. Eating the snake had given him the power of understanding the language of birds and animals.

Now it happened on this day that the Queen lost her most precious ring, and suspicion fell upon this trusted servant who went about everywhere. The King sent for him, and threatened that if it was not found by the next day, he would be sent to prison. In vain he protested his innocence; but he was not believed.

In his grief and anxiety he went down into the courtyard and wondered how he should get out of his difficulty. A number of ducks were lying peaceably together by a stream, stroking down their feathers with their bills, while they chattered gaily. The servant stood still to listen to them. They were telling each other of their morning's walks and experiences.

Then one of them said somewhat fretfully, "I have something lying heavy on my stomach. In my haste I swallowed the Queen's ring this morning."

The servant quickly seized it by the neck, carried it off into the kitchen, and said to the cook, "Here's a fine fat duck. You had better kill it at once."

"Yes, indeed," said the cook, weighing it in her hand. "It has spared no pains in stuffing itself. It should have been roasted long ago." So she killed it and cut it open, and there, sure enough, was the Queen's ring.

The servant now had no difficulty in proving his innocence. The King, to make up for his injustice, gave the servant leave to ask any favor he liked, and promised him the highest post about the court which he might desire. The servant, however, declined everything but a horse and some money to travel with, as he wanted to wander about for a while to see the world.

His request being granted he set off on his travels, and one day came to a pond where he saw three fishes caught among the reeds, gasping for breath. Although it is said that fishes are dumb, he understood their complaint at perishing thus miserably. As he had a compassionate heart, he got off his horse and put the three captives back into the water. They wriggled in their joy, stretched up their heads above the water, and cried, "We will remember that you saved us and will reward you for it."

He rode on again, and after a time he seemed to hear a voice in the sand at his feet. He listened, and heard an ant king complain, "I wish these human beings and their animals would keep out of our way. A clumsy horse has just put his hoof down upon a number of my people in the most heartless way."

He turned his horse into a side path, and the ant king cried, "We will remember and reward you."

The road now ran through a forest, and he saw a pair of ravens standing by their nest throwing out their young.

"Away with you, you gallows birds," they were saying. "We can't feed you any longer. You are old enough to look after yourselves."

The poor little nestlings lay on the ground, fluttering and flapping their wings and crying: "We poor helpless children must feed ourselves, and we can't even fly! We shall die of hunger. There is nothing else for it."

The good youth dismounted, killed his horse with his sword, and left the carcass as food for the young ravens. They hopped up to it and cried, "We will remember and reward you."

Now he had to depend upon his own legs, and after going a long way he came to a large town. There was much noise and bustle in the streets, where a man on horseback was making a proclamation.

"The King's daughter seeks a husband, but anyone who wishes to sue for her hand must accomplish a hard task. And if he does not bring it to a successful issue, he will forfeit his life." Many had already attempted the task, but they had risked their lives in vain.

When the youth saw the Princess, he was so dazzled by her beauty that he forgot all danger, at once sought an audience of the King, and announced himself as a suitor.

He was immediately led out to the seashore, and a golden ring was thrown into the water before his eyes. Then the King ordered him to fetch it out from the depths of the sea, adding, "If you come to land without it, you will be thrown back every time till you perish in the waves."

Everyone pitied the handsome youth, but they had to go and leave him standing solitary on the seashore.

He was pondering over what he should do when all at once he saw three fishes swimming towards him. They were no others than the very ones whose lives he had saved. The middle one carried a mussel shell in its mouth, which it laid on the sand at the feet of the youth. When he picked it up and opened it, there lay the ring.

Full of joy, he took it to the King, expecting that he would give him the promised reward. The proud Princess, however, when she heard that he was not her equal, despised him and demanded that he should perform yet another task. So she went into the garden herself, and strewed ten sacks of millet seeds among the grass.

"He must pick up every one of the seeds before the sun rises tomorrow morning," said she. "Not even a grain must be missing."

The youth sat miserably in the garden, wondering how it could possibly be done. But as he could not think of a plan, he remained sadly waiting for the dawn which would bring death to him.

But when the first sunbeams fell on the garden, he saw the ten sacks full to the top, and not a grain was missing. The ant king had come in

the night with thousands and thousands of his ants, and the grateful creatures had picked up the millet and filled the sacks.

The Princess came into the garden herself, and saw with amazement that the youth had completed the task.

But still she could not control her proud heart, and she said, "Even if he has accomplished these two tasks, he shall not become my husband till he brings me an apple from the tree of life."

The youth had no idea where to find the tree of life. He started off, however, meaning to walk as far as his legs would carry him, but he had no hope of finding it.

When he had traveled through three kingdoms, he was passing one night through a great forest, and he lay down under a tree to sleep. He heard a rustling among the branches, and a golden apple fell into his hand.

At the same time three ravens flew down and perched on his knee, and said, "We are the young ravens you saved from death. When we grew big and heard that you were looking for the golden apple, we flew across the sea to the end of the world, where the tree of life stands, and brought you the apple."

The youth, delighted, started on his homeward journey and took the golden apple to the beautiful Princess, who had now no further excuse to offer.

They divided the apple of life and ate it together, and then her heart was filled with love for him, and they lived happily to a great age.

THE FROG PRINCE

IN THE OLD TIMES, when it was still of some use to wish for the thing one wanted, there lived a king whose daughters were all handsome, but the youngest was so beautiful that the sun himself, who has seen so much, wondered at her beauty each time he shone over her. Near the royal castle there was a great dark wood, and in the wood under an old linden tree was a well. When the day was hot, the King's daughter used to go forth into the wood and sit by the brink of the cool well. And if the time seemed long, she would take out a golden ball and throw it up and catch it again, and this was her favorite pastime.

Now it happened one day that the golden ball, instead of falling back into the maiden's little hand which had sent it aloft, dropped to the ground near the edge of the well and rolled in. The King's daughter followed it with her eyes as it sank, but the well was deep—so deep

that the bottom could not be seen. Then she began to weep, and she wept and wept as if she could never be comforted.

And in the midst of her weeping she heard a voice saying to her, "What ails you, King's daughter? Your tears would melt a heart of stone."

And when she looked to see where the voice came from, there was nothing but a frog stretching his thick ugly head out of the water.

"Oh, is it you, old waddler?" said she. "I weep because my golden ball has fallen into the well."

"Never mind. Do not weep," said the frog. "I can help you. But what will you give me if I fetch up your ball?"

"Whatever you like, dear frog," said she. "Any of my clothes, my pearls and jewels, or even the golden crown that I wear."

"Your clothes, your pearls and jewels, and your golden crown are not for me," answered the frog. "But if you would love me, and have me for your companion and playfellow, and let me sit by you at table and eat from your plate and drink from your cup, and sleep in your little bed—if you would promise all this, then would I dive below the water and fetch you your golden ball again."

"Oh yes," she answered. "I will promise it all, whatever you want, if you will only get me my ball again."

But she thought to herself, "What nonsense he talks! As if he could do anything but sit in the water and croak with the other frogs, or could possibly be anyone's companion!"

But the frog, as soon as he heard her promise, drew his head under the water and sank down out of sight. But after a while he came to the surface again with the ball in his mouth, and he threw it on the grass.

The King's daughter was overjoyed to see her pretty plaything again, and she caught it up and ran off with it.

"Stop, stop!" cried the frog. "Take me up too. I cannot run as fast as you!"

But it was of no use, for croak, croak after her as he might, she would not listen to him. Instead, she hastened home and very soon forgot all about the poor frog, who had to betake himself to his well again.

The next day, when the King's daughter was sitting at table with the King and all the court, and was eating from her golden plate, there came something pitter-patter up the marble stairs, and then there came a knocking at the door and a voice crying, "King's youngest daughter, let me in!"

And she got up and ran to see who it could be, but when she opened the door, there was the frog sitting outside. Then she shut the door hastily and went back to her seat, feeling very uneasy.

The King noticed how quickly her heart was beating and said,

"My child, what are you afraid of? Is there a giant standing at the door ready to carry you away?"

"Oh no," answered she. "No giant, but a horrid frog."

"And what does the frog want?" asked the King.

"Oh, dear father," answered she. "when I was sitting by the well yesterday playing with my golden ball, it fell into the water. And while I was crying for the loss of it, the frog came and got it again for me on condition I would let him be my companion. I never thought that he could leave the water and come after me, but there he is now outside the door, and he wants to come in to me."

And then they all heard him knocking the second time and crying:

*"King's youngest daughter,
Open to me!
By the well water
What promised you me?
King's youngest daughter,
Now open to me!"*

"That which you have promised must you perform," said the King sternly. "So go now and let him in."

So she went and opened the door and the frog hopped in, following at her heels till she reached her chair.

Then he stopped and cried, "Lift me up to sit by you." But she delayed doing so until the King ordered her.

When once the frog was on the chair, he wanted to get on the table, and there he sat and said, "Now push your golden plate a little nearer so that we may eat together."

And so she did, but everybody could see how unwilling she was. And the frog feasted heartily, but every morsel seemed to stick in her throat.

"I have had enough now," said the frog at last. "And as I am tired, you must carry me to your room and make ready your silken bed, and we will lie down and go to sleep."

Then the King's daughter began to weep and was afraid of the cold frog, whom nothing would satisfy but he must sleep in her pretty clean bed.

Now the King grew angry with her and said, "What you have promised in your time of necessity, you must now perform."

So she picked up the frog with her finger and thumb, carried him upstairs, and put him in a corner. And when she had lain down to sleep, he came creeping up, saying, "I am tired and want sleep as much as you. Take me up or I will tell your father."

Then she felt beside herself with rage and, picking him up, she threw him with all her strength against the wall, crying, "Now will you be quiet, you horrid frog?"

But as he fell he ceased to be a frog, and became all at once a prince with beautiful kind eyes. And it came to pass that with her father's consent they became bride and bridegroom. And he told her how a wicked witch had bound him by her spells, and how no one but she alone could have released him, and that they two would go together to his father's kingdom.

And there came to the door a carriage drawn by eight white horses, with white plumes on their heads and with golden harness, and behind the carriage, faithful Henry, the servant of the young Prince, was standing. Now, faithful Henry had suffered such care and pain when his master was turned into a frog that he had been obliged to wear three iron bands over his heart, to keep it from breaking with trouble and anxiety. When the carriage started to take the Prince to his kingdom, and faithful Henry had helped them both in, he got up behind and was full of joy at his master's deliverance.

And when they had gone a part of the way, the Prince heard a sound at the back of the carriage as if something had broken, and he turned round and cried, "Henry, the wheel must be breaking!"

But Henry answered:

*"The wheel does not break;
'Tis the band round my heart
That, to lessen its ache,
When I grieved for your sake,
I bound round my heart."*

Again and yet once again there was the same sound, and the Prince thought it must be the wheel breaking, but it was the breaking of the other bands from faithful Henry's heart, because it was now so relieved and happy.

THE PINK

THERE WAS once a queen who had not been blessed with children. She prayed every morning as she walked in her garden that a son or daughter might be given to her. Then one day an angel came, and said to her, "Be content. You shall have a son, and he shall be endowed with the power of wishing, so that whatsoever he wishes for shall be granted to him." She hurried to the King and told him the joyful news. When the time came, a son was born to them and they were filled with delight.

Every morning the Queen used to take her little son into the gardens where the wild animals were kept, to bathe him* in a clear sparkling fountain. It happened one day, when the child was a little older, that as she sat with him on her lap she fell asleep.

The old cook, who knew that the child had the power of wishing, came by and stole it. He also killed a chicken and dropped some of its blood on the Queen's garments. Then he took the child away to a secret place where he placed it out to be nursed. Then he ran back to the King and accused the Queen of having allowed her child to be carried off by a wild animal.

When the King saw the blood on the Queen's garments, he believed the story and was overwhelmed with anger. He caused a high tower to be built, into which neither the sun nor the moon could penetrate. Then he ordered his wife to be shut up in it and the door walled up. She was to stay there for seven years without eating or drinking, so she would gradually pine away. But two angels from heaven, in the shape of white doves, came to her, bringing food twice a day till the seven years were ended.

Meanwhile the cook thought, "If the child really has the power of wishing, and I stay here, I might easily fall into disgrace." So he left the palace and went to the boy, who was then old enough to talk, and said to him, "Wish for a beautiful castle, with a garden and everything belonging to it." Hardly had the words passed the boy's lips than all that he had asked for was there.

After a time the cook said, "It is not good for you to be so much alone. Wish for a beautiful maiden to be your companion."

The Prince uttered the wish and immediately a maiden stood before them, more beautiful than any painter could paint. So they grew very fond of each other and played together, while the old cook went out hunting like any grand gentleman. But the idea came to him one day that the Prince might wish to go to his father some time, and he would thereby be placed in a very awkward position. So he took the maiden aside, and said to her, "Tonight when the boy is asleep, go and drive this knife into his heart. Then bring me his heart and his tongue. If you fail to do it you will lose your own life."

Then he went away, but when the next day came the maiden had not yet obeyed his command. She said, "Why should I shed his innocent blood, when he has never done harm to any creature in his life?"

The cook again said, "If you do not obey me you will lose your own life."

When he had gone away, she ordered a young hind to be brought and killed. Then she cut out its heart and its tongue and put them on a dish.

When she saw the old man coming, she said to the boy, "Get into bed and cover yourself completely."

The old scoundrel came in and said, "Where are the tongue and the heart of the boy?"

The maiden gave him the dish, but the Prince threw off the coverings and said, "You old sinner, why did you want to kill me? Now hear your sentence. You shall be turned into a black poodle with a gold chain round your neck, and you shall be made to eat live coals so that flames of fire will come out of your mouth."

As he said the words, the old man was changed into a black poodle with a gold chain round his neck, and the scullions brought live coals which he had to eat till the flames poured out of his mouth.

The Prince stayed on at the castle for a time, thinking of his mother, and wondering if she were still alive. At last he said to the maiden, "I am going into my own country. If you like, you can go with me. I will take you."

She answered, "Alas, it is so far off, and what should I do in a strange country where I know no one?"

As she did not wish to go, and yet they could not bear to be parted, he changed her into a beautiful pink which he took with him.

Then he set out on his journey, and the poodle was made to run alongside till the Prince reached his own country. There, he went straight to the tower where his mother was imprisoned, and as the tower was so very high, he wished for a ladder to reach the top. Then he climbed up, looked in, and cried, "Dearest mother, lady Queen, are you still alive?"

She, thinking it was the angels who brought her food, said, "I have just eaten. I do not want anything more."

Then he said, "I am your own dear son whom the wild animals were supposed to have devoured. But I am still alive and I shall soon come and rescue you."

Then he got down and went to his father. He had himself announced as a strange huntsman, anxious to take service with the King. The King said, "Yes, if he is skilled in game preserving, and can procure plenty of venison, I will engage him. But there has never before been any game in the whole district."

The huntsman promised to procure as much game as the King could possibly require for the royal table.

Then he called the whole hunt together and ordered them all to come into the forest with him. He caused a great circle to be enclosed, with only one outlet. Then he took his place in the middle and began to wish as hard as he could. Immediately over two hundred head of game came running into the enclosure. These the huntsmen had to shoot,

and then they were piled onto sixty country wagons and driven home to the King. So for once he was able to load his board with game, after having had none for many years.

The King was much pleased and commanded his whole court to a banquet on the following day. When they were all assembled, he said to the huntsman, "You shall sit by me because you are so clever."

He answered, "My lord and King, may it please Your Majesty, I am only a poor huntsman!"

The King, however, insisted and said, "I command you to sit by me."

As he sat there, his thoughts wandered to his dear mother, and he wished one of the courtiers would speak of her. Hardly had he wished it than the Lord High Marshal said, "Your Majesty, we are all rejoicing here. How fares it with Her Majesty the Queen? Is she still alive in the tower or has she perished?"

But the King answered, "She allowed my beloved son to be devoured by wild animals, and I do not wish to hear anything about her."

Then the huntsman stood up and said, "Gracious father, she is still alive, and I am her son. I was not devoured by wild animals, but I was taken away by the scoundrel of a cook. He stole me while my mother was asleep, and sprinkled her garments with the blood of a chicken." Then he brought up the black poodle with the golden chain and said, "This is the villain."

He ordered some live coals to be brought, which he made the dog eat in the sight of all the people till the flames poured out of his mouth. Then he asked the King if he would like to see the cook in his true shape, and wished him back, and there he stood in his white apron with his knife at his side.

The King was furious when he saw him and ordered him to be thrown into the deepest dungeon. Then the huntsman said further, "My father, would you like to see the maiden who so tenderly saved my life when she was ordered to kill me, although by so doing she might have lost her own life?"

The King answered, "Yes. I will gladly see her."

Then his son said, "Gracious father, I will show her to you first in the guise of a beautiful flower."

He put his hand into his pocket and brought out the pink. It was a finer one than the King had ever seen before. Then his son said, "Now I will show her to you in her true form."

The moment his wish was uttered, she stood before them in all her beauty, which was greater than any artist could paint.

The King sent ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting to the tower to bring the Queen back to his royal table. But when they reached the

tower they found that she would no longer eat or drink. She said, "The merciful God, who has preserved my life so long, will soon release me now."

Three days afterwards she died. At her burial the two white doves which had brought her food during her captivity followed and hovered over her grave.

The old King caused the wicked cook to be torn into four quarters, but his own heart was filled with grief and remorse, and he died soon after.

His son married the beautiful maiden he had brought home with him as a flower, and for all I know they may be living still.

THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE

THERE WAS once a fisherman who lived with his wife in a miserable little hovel close to the sea. He went to fish every day, and he fished and fished, and at last one day as he was sitting looking deep down into the shining water, he felt something on his line. When he hauled it up, there was a big flounder on the end of the line.

The flounder said to him, "Listen, fisherman, I beg you not to kill me. I am no common flounder. I am an enchanted prince! What good will it do you to kill me? I shan't be good to eat. Put me back into the water and leave me to swim about."

"Ho! ho!" said the fisherman. "You need not make so many words about it. I am quite ready to put back a flounder that can talk." And so saying, he put back the flounder into the shining water and it sank down to the bottom, leaving a streak of blood behind it. Then the fisherman got up and went back to his wife in the hovel.

"Husband," she said, "have you caught anything today?"

"No," said the man. "All I caught was one flounder. And he said he was an enchanted prince, so I put him back into the water."

"Did you not wish for anything then?" asked the goodwife.

"No," said the man. "What was there to wish for?"

"Alas," said his wife, "isn't it bad enough always to live in this wretched hovel? You might at least have wished for a nice clean cottage. Go back and call him! Tell him I want a pretty cottage. He will surely give us that."

"Alas," said the man, "what am I to go back there for?"

"Well," said the woman, "it was you who caught him and let him go again. He will certainly do that for you. Be off now."

The man was still not very willing to go, but he did not want to vex his wife and at last he went back to the sea.

He found the sea no longer bright and shining, but dull and green. He stood by it and said:

*"Flounder, flounder in the sea,
Prythee, hearken unto me:
My wife, Ilsebil, must have her own will,
And sends me to beg a boon of thee."*

The flounder came swimming up and said, "Well, what do you want?"

"Alas," said the man, "I had to call you, for my wife said I ought to have wished for something as I caught you. She doesn't want to live in our miserable hovel any longer. She wants a pretty cottage."

"Go home again then," said the flounder. "She has her wish fully."

The man went home and found his wife no longer in the old hut, but a pretty little cottage stood in its place and his wife was sitting on a bench by the door.

She took him by the hand and said, "Come and look in here. Isn't this much better?"

They went inside and found a pretty sitting room, a bedroom with a bed in it, a kitchen, and a larder furnished with everything of the best in tin and brass and every possible need. Outside there was a little yard with chickens and ducks and a little garden full of vegetables and fruit.

"Look!" said the woman. "Is not this nice?"

"Yes," said the man, "and so let it remain. We can live here very happily."

"We will see about that," said the woman. With that they ate something and went to bed.

Everything went well for a week or more, and then the wife said, "Listen, husband, this cottage is too cramped and the garden is too small. The flounder could have given us a bigger house. I want to live in a big stone castle. Go to the flounder and tell him to give us a castle."

"Alas, wife," said the man, "the cottage is good enough for us. What should we do with a castle?"

"Never mind," said his wife. "You just go to the flounder and he will manage it."

"No, wife," said the man. "The flounder gave us the cottage. I don't want to go back. As likely as not he'll be angry."

"Go, all the same," said the woman. "He can do it easily enough and willingly into the bargain. Just go!"

The man's heart was heavy and he was very unwilling to go. He said

to himself, "It's not right." But at last he went. He found the sea was no longer green: it was still calm, but dark violet and gray. He stood by it and said:

*"Flounder, flounder in the sea,
Prythee, hearken unto me:
My wife, Ilsebil, must have her own will,
And sends me to beg a boon of thee."*

"Now what do you want?" said the flounder.

"Alas," said the man, half scared, "my wife wants a big stone castle."

"Go home again," said the flounder. "She is standing at the door of it."

Then the man went away thinking he would find no house; but when he got back he found a great stone palace, and his wife was standing at the top of the steps waiting to go in. She took him by the hand and said, "Come in with me."

With that they went in and found a great hall paved with marble slabs, and numbers of servants in attendance who opened the great doors for them. The walls were hung with beautiful tapestries and the rooms were furnished with golden chairs and tables, while rich carpets covered the floors and crystal chandeliers hung from the ceilings. The tables groaned under every kind of delicate food and the most costly wines. Outside the house there was a great courtyard, with stables for horses and cows, and many fine carriages. Beyond this there was a great garden filled with the loveliest flowers and fine fruit trees. There was also a park half a mile long, and in it were stags and hinds and hares, and everything that one could wish for.

"Now," said the woman, "is not this worth having?"

"Oh yes," said the man, "and so let it remain. We will live in this beautiful palace and be content."

"We will think about that," said his wife, "and sleep upon it."

With that they went to bed.

Next morning the wife woke up first. Day was just dawning, and from her bed she could see the beautiful country around her. Her husband was still asleep, but she pushed him with her elbow and said, "Husband, get up and peep out of the window. See here, now, could we not be King over all this land? Go to the flounder. We will be King."

"Alas, wife," said the man, "why should we be King? I don't want to be King."

"Ah," said his wife, "if you will not be King, I will. Go to the flounder. I will be King."

"Alas, wife," said the man, "why do you want to be King? I don't want to ask the flounder."

"Why not?" said the woman. "Go you must. I insist I will be King."

So the man went, but he was quite sad because his wife would be King.

"It is not right," he said. "It is not right."

When he reached the sea, he found it dark, gray, and rough, and evil-smelling. He stood there and said:

*"Flounder, flounder in the sea,
Prythce, hearken unto me:
My wife, Ilsebil, must have her own will,
And sends me to beg a boon of thee."*

"Now what does she want?" said the flounder.

"Alas," said the man, "she wants to be King now."

"Go back. She is King already," said the flounder.

So the man went back, and when he reached the palace he found that it had grown much larger and a great tower had been added with handsome decorations. There was a sentry at the door and numbers of soldiers were playing drums and trumpets. As soon as he got inside the house he found everything was marble and gold, and the hangings were of velvet with great golden tassels. The doors of the salon were thrown wide open, and he saw the whole court assembled. His wife was sitting on a lofty throne of gold and diamonds. She wore a golden crown and carried in one hand a scepter of pure gold. On each side of her stood her ladies in a long row, every one a head shorter than the next.

He stood before her and said, "Alas, wife, are you now King?"

"Yes," she said. "Now I am King."

He stood looking at her for some time, and then he said, "Ah, wife, it is a fine thing for you to be King. Now we will not wish to be anything more."

"No, husband," she answered, quite uneasily. "I find that time hangs very heavy on my hands. I can't bear it any longer. Go back to the flounder. King I am, but I must also be Emperor."

"Alas, wife," said the man, "why do you now want to be Emperor?"

"Husband," she answered, "go to the flounder. Emperor I will be."

"Alas, wife," said the man, "Emperor he can't make you, and I won't ask him. There is only one emperor in the country, and Emperor the flounder cannot make you. That he can't."

"What?" said the woman. "I am King, and you are but my husband. To him you must go and that right quickly. If he can make king, he can also make an emperor. Emperor I will be, so go quickly."

He had to go, but he was quite frightened. And as he went he

thought, "This won't end well. Emperor is too shameless. The flounder will make an end of the whole thing."

With that he came to the sea, but now he found it quite black and heaving up from below in great waves. It tossed to and fro and a sharp wind blew over it, and the man trembled. So he stood there and said:

*"Flounder, flounder in the sea,
Prythce, hearken unto me:
My wife, Ilsebil, must have her own will,
And sends me to beg a boon of thee."*

"What does she want now?" said the flounder.

"Alas," he said, "my wife wants to be Emperor."

"Go back," said the flounder. "She is Emperor."

So the man went back, and when he got to the door he found that the whole palace was made of polished marble, with alabaster figures and golden decorations. Soldiers marched up and down before the doors, blowing their trumpets and beating their drums. Inside the palace, counts, barons, and dukes walked about as attendants, and they opened to him the doors, which were of pure gold.

He went in and saw his wife sitting on a huge throne made of solid gold. It was at least two miles high. She had on her head a great golden crown set with diamonds three yards high. In one hand she held the scepter, and in the other the orb of empire. On each side of her stood the gentlemen-at-arms in two rows, each one a little smaller than the other, from giants two miles high down to the tiniest dwarf no bigger than my little finger. She was surrounded by princes and dukes.

Her husband stood still and said, "Wife, are you now Emperor?"

"Yes," said she. "Now I am Emperor."

Then he looked at her for some time and said, "Alas, wife, how much better off are you for being Emperor?"

"Husband," she said, "what are you standing there for? Now I am Emperor, I mean to be Pope! Go back to the flounder."

"Alas, wife," said the man, "what won't you want next? Pope you cannot be. There is only one pope in Christendom. That's more than the flounder can do."

"Husband," she said, "Pope I will be, so go at once! I must be Pope this very day."

"No, wife," he said, "I dare not tell him. It's no good. It's too monstrous altogether. The flounder cannot make you Pope."

"Husband," said the woman, "don't talk nonsense. If he can make an emperor, he can make a pope. Go immediately. I am Emperor, and you are but my husband, and you must obey."

So he was frightened and went, but he was quite dazed. He shivered and shook and his knees trembled.

A great wind arose over the land, the clouds flew across the sky, and it grew as dark as night. The leaves fell from the trees, and the water foamed and dashed upon the shore. In the distance the ships were being tossed to and fro on the waves, and he heard them firing signals of distress. There was still a little patch of blue in the sky among the dark clouds, but towards the south they were red and heavy, as in a bad storm. In despair, he stood and said:

*"Flounder, flounder in the sea,
Prythee, hearken unto me:
My wife, Ilsebil, must have her own will,
And sends me to beg a boon of thee."*

"Now what does she want?" said the flounder.

"Alas," said the man, "she wants to be Pope!"

"Go back. Pope she is," said the flounder.

So back he went, and he found a great church surrounded with palaces. He pressed through the crowd, and inside he found thousands and thousands of lights. And his wife, entirely clad in gold, was sitting on a still higher throne with three golden crowns upon her head, and she was surrounded with priestly state. On each side of her were two rows of candles, from the biggest as thick as a tower down to the tiniest little taper. Kings and emperors were on their knees before her, kissing her shoe.

"Wife," said the man, looking at her. "are you now the Pope?"

"Yes," said she. "Now I am Pope."

So there he stood gazing at her, and it was like looking at a shining sun.

"Alas," he said, "are you better off for being Pope?"

At first she sat as stiff as a post, without stirring. Then he said, "Now, wife, be content with being Pope. Higher you cannot go."

"I will think about that," said the woman, and with that they both went to bed. Still she was not content and could not sleep for her inordinate desires. The man slept well and soundly, for he had walked about a great deal in the day. But his wife could think of nothing but what further grandeur she could demand. When the dawn reddened the sky she raised herself up in bed and looked out of the window, and when she saw the sun rise she said, "Ha! Can I not cause the sun and the moon to rise? Husband!" she cried, digging her elbow into his side, "wake up and go to the flounder. I will be Lord of the Universe."

Her husband, who was still more than half asleep, was so shocked that he fell out of bed. He thought he must have heard wrong. He rubbed his eyes and said, "Alas, wife, what did you say?"

"Husband," she said, "if I cannot be Lord of the Universe, and cause

the sun and moon to set and rise, I shall not be able to bear it. I shall never have another happy moment."

She looked at him so wildly that it caused a shudder to run through him.

"Alas, wife," he said, falling on his knees before her. "The flounder can't do that. Emperor and Pope he can make, but this is indeed beyond him. I pray you, control yourself and remain Pope."

Then she flew into a terrible rage. Her hair stood on end. She kicked him and screamed, "I won't bear it any longer. Now go!"

Then he pulled on his trousers and tore away like a madman. Such a storm was raging that he could hardly keep his feet. Houses and trees quivered and swayed, and mountains trembled, and the rocks rolled into the sea. The sky was pitchy black. It thundered and lightened, and the sea ran in black waves mountains high, crested with white foam. He shrieked out, but could hardly make himself heard:

*"Flounder, flounder in the sea,
Prythee, hearken unto me:
My wife, Ilsebil, must have her own will,
And sends me to beg a boon of thee."*

"Now what does she want?" asked the flounder.

"Alas," he said, "she wants to be Lord of the Universe."

"Now she must go back to her old hovel," said the flounder, "and there she is!" So there they are to this very day.

BRIAR ROSE (SLEEPING BEAUTY)

A LONG TIME AGO there lived a king and a queen, who said every day, "If only we had a child!" But for a long time they had none.

It happened once as the Queen was bathing that a frog crept out of the water onto the land and said to her, "Your wish shall be fulfilled. Before a year has passed you shall bring a daughter into the world."

The frog's words came true. The Queen had a little girl who was so beautiful that the King could not contain himself for joy, and he prepared a great feast. He invited his relatives, friends and acquaintances, and also the fairies, in order that they might be favorably and kindly disposed towards the child. There were thirteen of them in the kingdom, but as the King had only twelve golden plates for them to eat from, one of the fairies had to stay at home.

The feast was held with all splendor, and when it came to an end

the fairies all presented the child with a magic gift. One gave her virtue, another beauty, a third riches, and so on, with everything in the world that she could wish for.

When eleven of the fairies had said their say, the thirteenth suddenly appeared. She wanted to revenge herself for not having been invited.

Without greeting anyone or even glancing at the company, she called out in a loud voice, "The Princess shall prick herself with a distaff in her fifteenth year and shall fall down dead." And without another word she turned and left the hall.

Everyone was terror-stricken, but the twelfth fairy, whose wish was still unspoken, stepped forward. She could not cancel the curse but could only soften it, so she said, "It shall not be death, but a deep sleep lasting a hundred years, into which your daughter shall fall."

The King was so anxious to guard his dear child from the misfortune that he sent out a command that all the distaffs in the whole kingdom should be burned.

As time went on, all the promises of the fairies came true. The Princess grew up so beautiful, modest, kind, and clever that everyone who saw her could not but love her. Now it happened that on the very day when she was fifteen years old, the King and Queen were away from home and the Princess was left quite alone in the castle. She wandered about over the whole place, looking at rooms and halls as she pleased, and at last she came to an old tower. She ascended a narrow winding staircase and reached a little door. A rusty key was sticking in the lock, and when she turned it the door flew open. In a little room sat an old woman with a spindle, spinning her flax busily.

"Good day, Granny," said the Princess. "What are you doing?"

"I am spinning," said the old woman, and nodded her head.

"What is the thing that whirls around so merrily?" asked the Princess. And she took the spindle and tried to spin too. But she had scarcely touched it before the curse was fulfilled, and she pricked her finger with the spindle. The instant she felt the prick she fell upon the bed which was standing near, and lay still in a deep sleep which spread over the whole castle.

The King and Queen, who had just come home and had stepped into the hall, went to sleep, and all their courtiers with them. The horses went to sleep in the stable, the dogs in the yard, the doves on the roof, the flies on the wall. Yes, even the fire flickering on the hearth grew still and went to sleep, and the roast meat stopped crackling. The cook who was pulling the scullion's hair because he had made some mistake, let him go and went to sleep. The wind dropped, and on the trees in front of the castle not a leaf stirred.

But round the castle a hedge of briar roses began to grow up. Every year it grew higher, till at last it surrounded the whole castle so that nothing could be seen of it, not even the flags on the roof.

But there was a legend in the land about the lovely sleeping Briar Rose, as the King's daughter was called. And from time to time princes came and tried to force a way through the hedge into the castle. They found it impossible; for the thorns, as though they had hands, held them fast, and the princes remained caught in them without being able to free themselves. And so they died a miserable death.

After many, many years a prince came again to the country and heard an old man tell of the castle which stood behind the briar hedge, in which a most beautiful maiden called Briar Rose had been asleep for the last hundred years, and with her the King, the Queen, and all their courtiers. He knew also from his grandfather that many princes had already come and sought to pierce the briar hedge, and had remained caught in it and died a sad death.

Then the young Prince said, "I am not afraid. I am determined to go and look upon the lovely Briar Rose."

The good old man did all in his power to dissuade him, but the Prince would not listen to his words.

Now, however, the hundred years were just ended, and the day had come when Briar Rose was to wake up again. When the Prince approached the briar hedge it was in blossom, and was covered with beautiful large flowers which made way for him of their own accord and let him pass unharmed, and then closed up again into a hedge behind him.

In the courtyard he saw the horses and brindled hounds lying asleep. On the roof sat the doves with their heads under their wings. And when he went into the house, the flies were asleep on the walls. And near the throne lay the King and Queen. In the kitchen was the cook, with his hand raised as though about to strike the scullion, and the maid sat with the black fowl in her lap, which she had been about to pluck.

He went on farther, and all was so still that he could hear his own breathing. At last he reached the tower and opened the door into the little room where Briar Rose was asleep. There she lay, looking so beautiful that he could not take his eyes off her. He bent down and gave her a kiss.

As he touched her, Briar Rose opened her eyes and looked lovingly at him. Then they went down together, and the King woke up, and the Queen, and all the courtiers, and looked at each other with astonished eyes. The horses in the stable stood up and shook themselves, the hounds leaped about and wagged their tails, the doves on the roof lifted their heads from under their wings, looked around, and flew into the

fields. The flies on the walls began to crawl again; the fire in the kitchen roused itself and blazed up and cooked the food. The meat began to crackle, and the cook boxed the scullion's ears so soundly that he screamed aloud, while the maid finished plucking the fowl.

Then the wedding of the Prince and Briar Rose was celebrated with all splendor, and they lived happily till they died.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

THERE WAS once a miller who was very poor, but he had a beautiful daughter. Now it once happened that he had occasion to speak with the King, and in order to give himself an air of importance he said, "I have a daughter who can spin gold out of straw."

The King said to the miller, "That is an art in which I am much interested. If your daughter is as skillful as you say she is, bring her to my castle tomorrow, and I will put her to the test."

Accordingly when the girl was brought to the castle, the King conducted her to a chamber which was quite full of straw, gave her a spinning wheel and a reel, and said, "Now set to work. And if between tonight and tomorrow at dawn you have not spun this straw into gold, you must die." Thereupon he carefully locked the door of the chamber, and she remained alone.

There sat the unfortunate miller's daughter, and for the life of her did not know what to do. She had not the least idea how to spin straw into gold, and she became more and more distressed until at last she began to weep. Then all at once the door sprang open, and in stepped a little man who said, "Good evening, Mistress Miller. What are you weeping so for?"

"Alas," answered the maiden, "I've got to spin gold out of straw, and don't know how to do it."

Then the little man said, "What will you give me if I spin it for you?"

"My necklace," said the maid.

The little man took the necklace, sat down before the spinning wheel, and whir—whir—whir, in a trice the reel was full. Then he fixed another reel, and whir—whir—whir, thrice round, and that too was full. And so it went on until morning, when all the straw was spun and all the reels were full of gold.

Immediately at sunrise the King came, and when he saw the gold he was astonished and much pleased, but his mind became only the more avaricious. So he had the miller's daughter taken to another cham-

ber full of straw, larger than the former one, and he ordered her to spin it also in one night, if she valued her life.

The maiden was at her wit's end and began to weep. Then again the door sprang open, and the little man appeared and said, "What will you give me if I spin the straw into gold for you?"

"The ring off my finger," answered the maiden.

The little man took the ring, began to whirl again at the wheel, and by morning had spun all the straw into gold.

The King was delighted at sight of the masses of gold, but was not even yet satisfied. So he had the miller's daughter taken to a still larger chamber full of straw, and said, "This must you spin tonight into gold, but if you succeed you shall become my Queen." "Even if she is only a miller's daughter," thought he, "I shan't find a richer woman in the whole world."

When the girl was alone the little man came again and said for the third time, "What will you give me if I spin the straw for you this time?"

"I have nothing more to give," answered the girl.

"Well, promise me your first child if you become Queen."

"Who knows what may happen?" thought the miller's daughter, but she did not see any other way of getting out of the difficulty. So she promised the little man what he demanded, and in return he spun the straw into gold once more.

When the King came in the morning and found everything as he had wished, he celebrated his marriage with her, and the miller's daughter became Queen.

About a year afterwards a beautiful child was born, but the Queen had forgotten all about the little man. However, he suddenly entered her chamber and said, "Now, give me what you promised."

The Queen was terrified, and offered the little man all the wealth of the kingdom if he would let her keep the child. But the little man said, "No, I would rather have some living thing than all the treasures of the world."

Then the Queen began to moan and weep to such an extent that the little man felt sorry for her. "I will give you three days," said he, "and if within that time you discover my name you shall keep the child."

Then during the night the Queen called to mind all the names that she had ever heard, and sent a messenger all over the country to inquire far and wide what other names there were.

When the little man appeared the next day, she began with Caspar, Melchior, Balthazar, and mentioned all the names which she knew, one after the other. But at every one the little man said, "No. No. That's not my name."

The second day she had inquiries made all round the neighborhood for the names of people living there, and suggested to the little man all the most unusual and strange names. "Perhaps your name is Cowribs, or Spindleshanks, or Spiderlegs?"

But again he answered, "No. That's not my name."

On the third day the messenger came back and said, "I haven't been able to find any new names, but as I came round the corner of a wood on a lofty mountain, where the fox says good night to the hare, I saw a little house, and in front of the house a fire was burning. And around the fire a most ridiculous little man was leaping. He was hopping on one leg and singing:

*'Today I bake; tomorrow I brew my beer;
The next day I will bring the Queen's child here.
Ah! lucky 'tis that not a soul doth know
That Rumpelstiltskin is my name. Ho! Ho!'*"

You can imagine how delighted the Queen was when she heard the name! And soon afterwards when the little man came in and asked, "Now, Your Majesty, what is my name?" at first she asked, "Is your name Tom?"

"No."

"Is it Dick?"

"No."

"Is it, by chance, Rumpelstiltskin?"

"The devil told you that! The devil told you that!" shrieked the little man. And in his rage he stamped his right foot into the ground so deep that he sank up to his waist.

Then in his rage he seized his left leg with both hands and tore himself asunder in the middle.

RAPUNZEL

THERE WAS once a man and his wife who had long wished in vain for a child, and at last they had reason to hope that heaven would grant their wish. There was a little window at the back of their house, which overlooked a beautiful garden full of lovely flowers and shrubs. It was, however, surrounded by a high wall, and nobody dared to enter it, because it belonged to a powerful witch who was feared by everybody.

One day the woman, standing at this window and looking into the garden, saw a bed planted with beautiful rampion. It looked so fresh

and green that she longed to eat some of it. This longing increased every day; and as she knew it could never be satisfied, she began to look pale and miserable and to pine away. Then her husband was alarmed and said, "What ails you, my dear wife?"

"Alas!" she answered. "If I cannot get any of the rampion to eat from the garden behind our house, I shall die."

Her husband, who loved her, thought, "Before you let your wife die you must fetch her some of that rampion, cost what it may." So in the twilight he climbed over the wall into the witch's garden, hastily picked a handful of rampion, and took it back to his wife. She immediately prepared it and ate it very eagerly. It was so very, very nice that the next day her longing for it increased threefold. She could have no peace unless her husband fetched her some more. So in the twilight he set out again, but when he got over the wall he was terrified to see the witch before him.

"How dare you come into my garden like a thief and steal my rampion?" she said, with angry looks. "It shall be the worse for you!"

"Alas!" he answered. "Be merciful to me. I am only here from necessity. My wife sees your rampion from the window, and she has such a longing for it that she would die if she could not get some of it."

The anger of the witch abated and she said to him, "If it is as you say, I will allow you to take away with you as much rampion as you like, but on one condition. You must give me the child which your wife is about to bring into the world. I will care for it like a mother, and all will be well with it."

In his fear the man consented to everything. And when the baby was born, the witch appeared, gave it the name of Rapunzel (rampion), and took it away with her.

Rapunzel was the most beautiful child under the sun. When she was twelve years old, the witch shut her up in a tower which stood in a wood. It had neither staircase nor doors, but only a little window quite high up in the wall.

When the witch wanted to enter the tower, she stood at the foot of it and cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!" Rapunzel had splendid long hair, as fine as spun gold. As soon as she heard the voice of the witch, she unfastened her plaits and twisted them round a hook by the window. They fell twenty ells downwards, and the witch climbed up by them.

It happened a couple of years later that the King's son rode through the forest and came close to the tower. From thence he heard a song so lovely that he stopped to listen. It was Rapunzel who in her loneliness made her sweet voice resound to pass away the time. The King's son

wanted to join her, and he sought for the door of the tower but there was none to find.

He rode home, but the song had touched his heart so deeply that he went into the forest every day to listen to it. Once when he was hidden behind a tree he saw a witch come to the tower and call out:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!"

Then Rapunzel lowered her plaits of hair and the witch climbed up to her.

"If that is the ladder by which one ascends," he thought, "I will try my luck myself." And the next day, when it began to grow dark, he went to the tower and cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!"

The hair fell down and the King's son climbed up it.

At first Rapunzel was terrified, for she had never set eyes on a man before. But the King's son talked to her kindly, and told her that his heart had been so deeply touched by her song that he had no peace and was obliged to see her. Then Rapunzel lost her fear. And when he asked if she would have him for her husband, and she saw that he was young and handsome, she thought, "He will love me better than old Mother Gothel." So she said, "Yes," and laid her hand in his. She said, "I will gladly go with you, but I do not know how I am to get down from this tower. When you come, will you bring a skein of silk with you every time? I will twist it into a ladder, and when it is long enough I will descend by it, and you can take me away with you on your horse."

She arranged with him that he should come and see her every evening, for the old witch came in the daytime. The witch discovered nothing till suddenly Rapunzel said to her, "Tell me, Mother Gothel, how can it be that you are so much heavier to draw up than the young prince who will be here before long?"

"Oh, you wicked child, what do you say? I thought I had separated you from all the world, and yet you have deceived me." In her rage she seized Rapunzel's beautiful hair, twisted it twice round her left hand, snatched up a pair of shears, and cut off the plaits, which fell to the ground. She was so merciless that she took poor Rapunzel away into a wilderness, where she forced her to live in the greatest grief and misery.

In the evening of the day on which she had banished Rapunzel, the witch fastened the plaits which she had cut off to the hook by the window. And when the Prince came and called: "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!" she lowered the hair. The Prince climbed up, but there he found, not his beloved Rapunzel, but the witch, who looked at him with angry and wicked eyes.

"Ah!" she cried mockingly, "you have come to fetch your ladylove,

but the pretty bird is no longer in her nest. And she can sing no more, for the cat has seized her and it will scratch your own eyes out too. Rapunzel is lost to you. You will never see her again."

The Prince was beside himself with grief, and in his despair he sprang out of the window. He was not killed, but his eyes were scratched out by the thorns among which he fell. He wandered about blind in the wood and had nothing but roots and berries to eat. He did nothing but weep and lament over the loss of his beloved wife Rapunzel. In this way he wandered about for some years, till at last he reached the wilderness where Rapunzel had been living in great poverty. He heard a voice which seemed very familiar to him and he went towards it. Rapunzel knew him at once and fell weeping upon his neck. Two of her tears fell upon his eyes, and they immediately grew quite clear and he could see as well as ever.

He took her to his kingdom, where he was received with joy, and they lived long and happily together.

THE SALAD

THERE WAS once a merry young huntsman who went into the forest to hunt. He was gay and lighthearted, and whistled a tune upon a leaf as he went along.

Suddenly an ugly old crone spoke to him and said, "Good morning, dear huntsman. You are merry and happy enough, while I am hungry and thirsty. Pray give me an alms."

The huntsman pitied the poor old woman, put his hand in his pocket, and made her a present according to his means.

Then he wanted to go on, but the old woman held him back and said, "Hark ye, dear huntsman, I will make you a present because of your good heart. Go on your way and you will come to a tree on which nine birds are sitting. They will have a cloak in their claws, over which they are fighting. Take aim with your gun and shoot into the middle of them. They will drop the cloak and one of the birds will fall down dead. Take the cloak with you. It is a wishing cloak. When you throw it round your shoulders you only have to wish yourself at a place to be there at once. Take the heart out of the dead bird and swallow it whole. Then you will find a gold coin under your pillow every single morning when you wake."

The huntsman thanked the wise woman and thought, "She promises fine things. If only they turn out as well!"

When he had gone about a hundred paces he heard above him, in the branches of a tree, such a chattering and screaming that he looked up. There he saw a flock of birds tearing a garment with their beaks and claws. They were snatching and tearing at it as if each one wanted to have it for himself.

"Well," said the huntsman, "this is extraordinary. It is exactly what the old woman said."

He put his gun to his shoulder, took aim, and fired right into the middle of them, making the feathers fly about. The birds took flight with a great noise, all except one, which fell dead, and the cloak dropped at his feet.

He did as the old woman had told him: he cut the heart out of the bird and swallowed it whole. Then he took the cloak home with him. When he woke in the morning, he remembered the old woman's promise, and looked under his pillow to see if all was true. There, sure enough, lay the golden coin shining before him. The next morning he found another, and found the same every morning when he got up. He collected quite a heap of gold and at last he thought, "What is the good of all my gold if I stay at home here? I will go and look about me in the world." So he took leave of his parents, shouldered his gun, and started off into the world.

It so happened that one day he came to a thick forest, and when he got through it he saw a fine castle lying in the plain beyond. He saw an old woman standing in one of the windows looking out, with a beautiful golden-haired maiden beside her.

But the old woman was a witch and she said to the maiden, "Here comes someone out of the forest. He has a wonderful treasure inside him. We must try to get it from him, my darling. It will suit us better than him. He has a bird's heart about him, and therefore he finds a gold coin every morning under his pillow when he wakes."

She told the girl how he had got it and at last said, "If you don't get it from him it will be the worse for you."

When the huntsman got nearer, he saw the maiden and said, "I have been wandering about a long time. I will go into this castle and rest. I have plenty of money."

But the real reason was that he had caught sight of the pretty picture at the window. He went in and he was kindly received and hospitably treated. Before long, he was so charmed of the witch maiden that he thought of nothing else and cared for nothing but pleasing her.

The old woman said to the maiden, "Now we must get the bird's heart. He will never miss it."

They concocted a potion, and when it was ready they put it into a

goblet. And the maiden took it to him and said, "Now, my beloved, you must drink to me."

He took the cup and drank the potion, and when he was overpowered by it the bird's heart came out of his mouth. The maiden took it away secretly and swallowed it herself, for the old woman wanted to have it. From this time on, the huntsman found no more gold under his pillow, but the coin was always under the maiden's instead. The old woman used to fetch it away every morning. He was so much in love that he thought of nothing but enjoying himself in the maiden's company.

Then the old woman said, "We have got the bird's heart but we must have his wishing cloak too."

The maiden said, "Let us leave him that. We have taken away his wealth."

The old woman was very angry and said, "A cloak like that is a very wonderful thing and not often to be got. Have it I must and will." So the maiden obeyed the witch's orders, placed herself at the window, and looked sadly out at the distant range of hills.

The huntsman said, "Why are you so sad?"

"Alas, my love," was her answer, "over there are the garnet mountains, where the precious stones are found. I long for them so much that I grow sad whenever I think of them. But who could ever get them? The birds which fly, perhaps. No mortal could ever reach them."

"If that is all your trouble," said the huntsman, "I can soon lift that load from your heart."

Then he drew her under his cloak and in a moment they were both sitting on the mountain. The precious stones were glittering around them. Their hearts rejoiced at the sight of them and they soon gathered together some of the finest and largest.

Now the witch had so managed that the huntsman began to feel his eyes grow very heavy. Then he said to the maiden, "We will sit down to rest a while. I am so tired I can hardly stand."

So they sat down and he laid his head on her lap and was soon fast asleep. As soon as he was asleep, the maiden slipped the cloak from his shoulders and put it on her own, loaded herself with the precious garnets, and wished herself at home. When the huntsman had had his sleep out, he woke up and saw that his beloved had betrayed him and left him alone on the wild mountain.

"Oh, what treachery is in the world!" he exclaimed, as he sat down in grief. He did not know what to do.

Now the mountain belonged to some wild and savage giants who lived on it, and before long he saw three of them striding along. He quickly lay down again and pretended to be fast asleep.

The first one, as he came along, stumbled against him and said, "What kind of earthworm is this?"

The second said, "Tread on him and kill him."

But the third said, "It isn't worth the trouble. Let him alone! He can't live here, and when he climbs higher up the mountain the clouds will roll down and carry him off."

Then they passed on and as soon as they were gone, the huntsman, who had heard all they said, got up and climbed to the top of the mountain. After he had sat there for a time, a cloud floated over him and carried him away. At first he was swept through the air, but then he was gently lowered and deposited within a large walled garden, upon a soft bed of lettuce and other herbs.

He looked around him and said, "If only I had something to eat! I am so hungry, and it will be difficult to get away from here. I see neither apples nor pears nor any other fruit—nothing but salad and herbs."

At last, however, he thought, "At the worst, I can eat some of this salad. It does not taste very good, but it will at least be refreshing."

He picked out a fine head of lettuce and began eating it. But he had hardly swallowed a little piece when he began to feel very odd and quite changed. He felt four legs growing, a big head, and two long ears, and he saw to his horror that he was changed into an ass.

As he still felt as hungry as ever and the juicy salad was now very much to his taste, he went on eating greedily. At last he reached another kind of salad, which he had hardly tasted when he felt a new change taking place, and found himself back in his human shape. After this he lay down and slept off his fatigue.

When he woke next morning he broke off a head of the bad salad and a head of the good and thought, "These will help me to regain my own and also to punish the traitors."

He put the salad into his wallet, climbed over the wall, and went off to find the castle of his beloved.

After wandering about for a few days, he was fortunate enough to find it. Then he stained his face and disguised himself so that his own mother would not have known him, and went to the castle to ask for shelter.

"I am so tired," he said. "I cannot go any further."

The witch said, "Who are you, countryman, and what do you want?"

He answered, "I am a messenger from the King. He sent me to find the rarest salad which grows under the sun. I have been lucky enough to find it and I carry it with me. But the sun is so burning that I am afraid the tender plant will be withered, and I don't know if I shall be able to take it any further."

When the old witch heard about the rare salad, she felt a great desire to have some and said, "Good countryman, let me try the wonderful salad."

"By all means," he answered. "I have two heads with me and you shall have one." So saying, he opened his sack and handed her the bad one.

The witch had no suspicions, and her mouth so watered for the new dish that she went to the kitchen herself to prepare it. When it was ready, she could not wait till it was put upon the table, but put a few leaves into her mouth at once. Hardly had she swallowed them when she lost her human shape, and she ran out into the courtyard as an old she-ass.

Then the kitchen maid came in and saw the salad standing ready, and was about to put it on the table. But on the way the fancy to taste it seized her, according to her usual habit, and she ate a few leaves. The power of the salad at once became apparent, because she also turned into an ass and ran out into the yard to join the old witch, while the dish of salad fell to the ground.

In the meantime the messenger was sitting with the beautiful maiden, and as no one appeared with the salad, she also was seized with a desire to taste it. She said, "I don't know what has become of the salad."

But the huntsman thought, "The plant must have done its work," and said, "I will go into the kitchen and see."

As soon as he got downstairs he saw the two asses running about and the salad lying on the ground.

"This is all right," he said. "Two of them are done for." Then he picked up the leaves, put them on a dish, and took them to the maiden.

"I am bringing the precious food to you myself," said he, "so that you will not have to wait any longer."

She ate some, and like the others was immediately changed into an ass, and ran out to them in the yard.

When the huntsman had washed his face so that the creatures might know him, he went into the courtyard and said, "Now you shall be paid for your treachery."

He tied them all together with a rope and drove them along till he came to a mill. He tapped at the window, and the miller put his head out and asked what he wanted.

"I have three bad animals here," he said, "that I want to get rid of. If you will take them and feed them and treat them as I wish, I will pay you what you like to ask."

"How do you want them treated?" said the miller.

The huntsman said he wanted the old she-ass (the witch) to be well beaten three times a day and fed on it. The younger one, which was the

maid, beaten once and fed three times. The youngest of all, who was the beautiful maiden, was to be fed three times and not beaten at all. He could not find it in his heart to have her beaten. Then he went back to the castle and found everything he wanted.

A few days later the miller came and told him that the old ass which was to be beaten three times and fed once was dead. "The other two," he said, "which are to be fed three times, are not dead, but they are pining away and won't last long."

The huntsman's heart was stirred with pity and he told the miller to bring them back to him. When they came he gave them some of the other salad to eat, so that they took their human shapes again. The beautiful maiden fell on her knees before him, and said, "Oh, my beloved, forgive me all the wrong I have done you. My mother forced me to do it. It was against my own will, for I love you dearly. Your wishing cloak is hanging in the cupboard, and you shall have the bird's heart back too."

But he said, "Keep it. It will be all the same, as I will take you to be my own true wife."

Their marriage was soon after celebrated and they lived happily together till they died.

THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS

A CERTAIN MAN had an ass which for many years carried sacks to the mill without tiring. At last, however, its strength was worn out and it was no longer of any use for work. Accordingly its master began to ponder as to how best to cut down its keep. But the ass, seeing mischief in the air, ran away and started on the road to Bremen. There he thought he could become a town musician.

When he had been traveling a short time, he fell in with a hound, who was lying panting on the road as though he had run himself off his legs.

"Well, why are you panting so, Growler?" said the ass.

"Ah," said the hound, "just because I am old, and every day I get weaker. And also, because I can no longer keep up with the pack, my master wanted to kill me, so I took my departure. But now how am I to earn my bread?"

"Do you know what?" said the ass. "I am going to Bremen and shall there become a town musician. Come with me and take your part in the music. I shall play the lute, and you shall beat the kettledrum."

The hound agreed and they went on.

A short time afterwards they came upon a cat sitting in the road, with a face as long as a wet week.

"Well, why are you so cross, Whiskers?" the ass asked him.

"Who can be cheerful when he is out at elbows?" said the cat. "I am getting on in years and my teeth are blunted, and I prefer to sit by the stove and purr instead of hunting round after mice. Just because of this my mistress wanted to drown me. I made myself scarce, but now I don't know where to turn."

"Come with us to Bremen," said the ass. "You are a great hand at serenading, so you can become a town musician."

The cat consented and joined them.

Next the fugitives passed by a yard where a barnyard fowl was sitting on the door, crowing with all its might.

"You crow so loud you pierce one through and through," said the ass. "What is the matter?"

"Why, didn't I prophesy fine weather for Lady Day, when Our Lady washes the Christ Child's little garment and wants to dry it? But notwithstanding this, because Sunday visitors are coming tomorrow, the mistress has no pity, and she has ordered the cook to make me into soup. So I shall have my neck wrung tonight. Now I am crowing with all my might while I have the chance."

"Come along, Red-comb," said the ass. "You had much better come with us. We are going to Bremen and you will find a much better fate there. You have a good voice, and when we make music together there will be quality in it."

The cock allowed himself to be persuaded and they all four went off together. They could not, however, reach the town in one day, and by evening they arrived at a wood, where they determined to spend the night. The ass and the hound lay down under a big tree. The cat and the cock settled themselves in the branches, the cock flying right up to the top, which was the safest place for him. Before going to sleep he looked round once more in every direction. Suddenly he called out to his comrades that there must be a house not far off, for he saw a light,

"Very well," said the ass. "Let us set out and make our way to it, for the entertainment here is very bad."

The hound thought some bones or meat would suit him too, so they set out in the direction of the light. They soon saw it shining more clearly and getting bigger and bigger, till they reached a brightly lighted robbers' den. The ass, being the tallest, looked in the window.

"What do you see, old Jackass?" asked the cock.

"What do I see?" answered the ass. "Why, a table spread with deli-

cious food and drink, and robbers seated at it enjoying themselves."

"That would just suit us," said the cock.

"Yes, if we were only there," answered the ass.

Then the animals took counsel as to how to set about driving the robbers out. At last they hit upon a plan.

The ass was to take up his position with his forefeet on the window sill, the hound was to jump on his back, the cat to climb up onto the hound, and last of all the cock was to fly up and perch on the cat's head. When they were thus arranged, at a given signal they all began to perform their music. The ass brayed, the hound barked, the cat mewed, and the cock crowed. Then they dashed through the window, shivering the panes. The robbers jumped up at the terrible noise. They thought nothing less than that the devil was coming in upon them and fled into the wood in the greatest alarm. Then the four animals sat down to table and helped themselves according to taste, and they ate as though they had been starving for weeks. When they had finished, they extinguished the light and looked for sleeping places, each one to suit his nature and taste.

The ass lay down on a pile of straw, the hound behind the door, the cat on the hearth near the warm ashes, and the cock flew up to the rafters. As they were tired from the long journey, they soon went to sleep.

When midnight was past, and the robbers saw from a distance that the light was no longer burning and that all seemed quiet, the chief said, "We ought not to have been scared by a false alarm." And he ordered one of the robbers to go and examine the house.

Finding all quiet, the messenger went into the kitchen to kindle a light. And taking the cat's glowing, fiery eyes for live coals, he held a match close to them so as to light it. But the cat would stand no nonsense—it flew at his face, spat, and scratched. He was terribly frightened and ran away. He tried to get out the back door, but the hound, who was lying there, jumped up and bit his leg. As he ran across the pile of straw in front of the house, the ass gave him a good sound kick with his hind legs; while the cock, who had awakened at the uproar quite fresh and gay, cried out from his perch, "Cock-a-doodle-doo."

Thereupon the robber ran back as fast as he could to his chief and said, "There is a gruesome witch in the house who breathed on me and scratched me with her long fingers. Behind the door there stands a man with a knife, who stabbed me, while in the yard lies a black monster who hit me with a club. And upon the roof the judge is seated, and he called out, 'Bring the rogue here!' So I hurried away as fast as I could."

Thenceforward the robbers did not venture again to the house, which pleased the four Bremen musicians so much that they never wished to leave it again.

CINDERELLA

THE WIFE of a rich man fell ill, and when she felt that she was nearing her end she called her only daughter to her bedside and said, "Dear child, continue devout and good. Then God will always help you, and I will look down upon you from heaven and watch over you."

Thereupon she closed her eyes and breathed her last.

The maiden went to her mother's grave every day and wept, and she continued to be devout and good. When the winter came, the snow spread a white covering on the grave. And when the sun of spring had unveiled it again, the husband took another wife. The new wife brought home with her two daughters who were fair and beautiful to look upon, but base and black at heart.

Then began a sad time for the unfortunate stepchild.

"Is this stupid goose to sit with us in the parlor?" they said. "Whoever wants to eat bread must earn it. Go and sit with the kitchenmaid."

They took away her pretty clothes and made her put on an old gray frock, and gave her wooden clogs.

"Just look at the proud princess! How well she's dressed," they laughed, as they led her to the kitchen.

There the girl was obliged to do hard work from morning till night, to get up at daybreak, carry water, light the fire, cook, and wash. Not content with that, the sisters inflicted on her every vexation they could think of. They made fun of her, and tossed the peas and lentils among the ashes, so that she had to sit down and pick them out again. In the evening, when she was worn out with work, she had no bed to go to but had to lie on the hearth among the cinders. And because, on account of that, she always looked dusty and dirty, they called her Cinderella.

It happened one day that the father had a mind to go to the fair. So he asked both his stepdaughters what he should bring home for them.

"Fine clothes," said one.

"Pearls and jewels," said the other.

"But you, Cinderella," said he, "what will you have?"

"Father, break off for me the first twig which brushes against your hat on your way home."

Well, for his two stepdaughters he brought beautiful clothes, pearls, and jewels. And on his way home, as he was riding through a green copse, a hazel twig grazed against him and knocked his hat off. Then he broke off the branch and took it with him.

When he got home he gave his stepdaughters what they had asked for, and to Cinderella he gave the twig from the hazel tree.

Cinderella thanked him, and went to her mother's grave and planted the twig upon it. She wept so much that her tears fell and watered it, and it took root and became a fine tree.

Cinderella went to the grave three times every day. She wept and prayed there, and every time she went a little white bird came and perched upon the tree. And when she uttered a wish, the little bird threw down to her what she had wished for.

Now it happened that the King proclaimed a festival which was to last three days, and to which all the beautiful maidens in the country were invited, in order that his son might choose a bride.

When the two stepdaughters heard that they were also to be present, they were in high spirits.

They called Cinderella and said, "Brush our hair and clean our shoes and fasten our buckles, for we are going to the feast at the King's palace."

Cinderella obeyed but wept, for she also would gladly have gone to the ball with them, and she begged her stepmother to give her leave to go.

"You, Cinderella?" she said. "Why, you are covered with dust and dirt. You go to the festival? You have no clothes or shoes, and yet you want to go to the ball."

As she went on asking, however, her stepmother said, "Well, I have thrown a dishful of lentils into the cinders. If you have picked them all out in two hours you shall go."

The girl went through the back door into the garden and cried, "Ye gentle doves, ye turtledoves, and all ye little birds under heaven, come and help me—

*"The good into a dish to throw,
The bad into your crops can go."*

Then two white doves came in by the kitchen window and were followed by the turtledoves, and finally all the little birds under heaven flocked in chirping and settled down among the ashes. And the doves gave a nod with their little heads, peck, peck, peck. And then the rest began also, peck, peck, peck, and collected all the good beans into the dish. Scarcely had an hour passed before they had finished and had all flown out again.

Then the girl brought the dish to her stepmother, and was delighted to think that now she would be able to go to the feast with them.

But she said, "No, Cinderella, you have no clothes and cannot dance. You will only be laughed at."

But when she began to cry, the stepmother said, "If you can pick out two whole dishes of lentils from the ashes in an hour, you shall go with us." And she thought, "She will never be able to do that."

When her stepmother had thrown the dishes of lentils among the ashes, the girl went out through the back door and cried, "Ye gentle doves, ye turtledoves, and all ye little birds under heaven, come and help me—

*"The good into a dish to throw,
The bad into your crops can go."*

Then two white doves came in by the kitchen window, and were followed by the turtledoves and all the other little birds under heaven. And in less than an hour the lentils had been picked up, and they had all flown away.

Then the girl carried the dish to her stepmother and was delighted to think that she would now be able to go to the ball.

But she said, "It's not a bit of good. You can't go with us, for you've got no clothes and you can't dance. We should be quite ashamed of you."

Thereupon she turned her back upon her and hurried off with her two proud daughters.

After everyone had left the house, Cinderella went out to her mother's grave under the hazel tree, and cried:

*"Shiver and shake, dear little tree,
Gold and silver shower on me."*

Then the bird threw down to her a gold and silver robe and a pair of slippers embroidered with silk and silver. With all speed she put on the robe and went to the feast. But her stepsisters and their mother did not recognize her. They supposed that she was some foreign princess, so beautiful did she appear in her golden dress. They never gave a thought to Cinderella, but imagined that she was sitting at home in the dirt, picking the lentils out of the cinders.

The Prince came up to the stranger, took her by the hand, and danced with her. In fact he would not dance with anyone else and never let go of her hand. If anyone came up to ask her to dance, he said, "This is my partner."

She danced until nightfall and then wanted to go home, but the Prince said, "I will go with you and escort you." He wanted to see to whom the beautiful maiden belonged. But she slipped out of his way and sprang into the pigeon house.

Then the Prince waited till her father came, and told him that the unknown maiden had vanished into the pigeon house.

The old man thought, "Could it be Cinderella?" And he had an ax brought to him so that he might break down the pigeon house, but there was no one inside.

When they went home, there lay Cinderella in her dirty clothes among the cinders, and a dismal oil lamp was burning in the chimney

corner, for Cinderella had quietly jumped out of the pigeon house and had run back to the hazel tree. There she had taken off her beautiful clothes and laid them on the grave, and the bird had taken them away again. Then she had settled herself among the ashes on the hearth in her old gray frock.

On the second day, when the festival was renewed and her parents and stepsisters had started forth again, Cinderella went to the hazel tree and said:

*"Shiver and shake, dear little tree,
Gold and silver shower on me."*

Then the bird threw down a still more gorgeous robe than on the previous day. And when she appeared at the festival in this robe, everyone was astounded by her beauty.

The King's son had waited till she came and at once took her hand, and she danced with no one but him. When others came forward and invited her to dance, he said, "This is my partner."

At nightfall she wished to leave; but the Prince went after her, hoping to see into what house she went, but she sprang out into the garden behind the house. There stood a fine big tree on which the most delicious pears hung. She climbed up among the branches as nimbly as a squirrel, and the Prince could not make out what had become of her.

But he waited till her father came and then said to him, "The unknown maiden has slipped away from me, and I think that she has jumped into the pear tree."

The father thought, "Can it be Cinderella?" And he had the ax brought to cut down the tree, but there was no one in it. When they went home and looked into the kitchen, there lay Cinderella among the cinders as usual, for she had jumped down on the other side of the tree, taken back the beautiful clothes to the bird on the hazel tree, and put on her old gray frock.

On the third day, when her parents and sisters had started, Cinderella went again to her mother's grave and said:

*"Shiver and shake, dear little tree,
Gold and silver shower on me."*

Then the bird threw down a dress which was so magnificent that no one had ever seen the like before, and the slippers were entirely of gold. When she appeared at the festival in this attire, they were all speechless with astonishment. The Prince danced only with her, and if anyone else asked her to dance he said, "This is my partner."

When night fell and she wanted to leave, the Prince was more desirous than ever to accompany her, but she darted away from him so quickly that he could not keep up with her. But the Prince had used a stratagem, and had caused the steps to be covered with cobbler's wax.

The consequence was, that as the maiden sprang down them, her left slipper remained sticking there. The Prince took it up. It was small and dainty and made entirely of gold.

The next morning he went with it to Cinderella's father and said to him, "No other shall become my wife but she whose foot this golden slipper fits."

The two sisters were delighted at that, for they both had beautiful feet. The eldest went into the room intending to try on the slipper, and her mother stood beside her. But her great toe prevented her getting it on. Her foot was too long.

Then her mother handed her a knife and said, "Cut off the toe. When you are Queen you won't have to walk any more."

The girl cut off her toe, forced her foot into the slipper, stifled her pain, and went out to the Prince. Then he took her up on his horse as his bride and rode away with her.

However, they had to pass the grave on the way, and there sat the two doves on the hazel tree and cried:

*"Prithce, look back, prithce, look back,
There's blood on the track.
The shoe is too small;
At home the true bride is waiting thy call."*

Then he looked at her foot and saw how the blood was streaming from it. So he turned his horse round and carried the false bride back to her home, and said that she was not the right one.

Then the second sister must try the shoe. She went into the room and succeeded in getting her toes into the shoe, but her heel was too big.

Then her mother handed her a knife and said, "Cut a bit off your heel. When you are Queen, you won't have to walk any more."

The maiden cut a bit off her heel, forced her foot into the shoe, stifled her pain, and went out to the Prince. Then he took her up on his horse as his bride and rode off with her. As they passed the grave, the two doves were sitting on the hazel tree, crying:

*"Prithce, look back, prithce, look back,
There's blood on the track.
The shoe is too small;
At home the true bride is waiting thy call."*

He looked down at her foot and saw that it was streaming with blood and that there were dark red spots on her stocking. Then he turned his horse and brought the false bride back to her home.

"This is not the right one either," he said. "Have you no other daughter?"

"No," said the man. "There is only a daughter of my late wife's, a puny, stunted drudge, but she cannot possibly be the bride."

The Prince said that she must be sent for.

But the mother answered, "Oh no. She is much too dirty. She mustn't be seen on any account."

He was absolutely determined, however, to have his way, and they were obliged to summon Cinderella.

When she had washed her hands and face, she went up and curtsied to the Prince, who handed her the golden slipper. Then she sat down on a bench, pulled off her wooden clog, and put on the slipper, which fitted to a nicety. And when she stood up and the Prince looked into her face, he recognized the beautiful maiden that he had danced with and cried, "This is the true bride!"

The stepmother and the two sisters were dismayed and turned white with rage. But he took Cinderella on his horse and rode off with her.

As they rode past the hazel tree the two doves cried:

*"Prithce, loob back, prithce, loob back,
No blood's on the track.
The shoe's not too small;
You carry the true bride home to your hall."*

And when they had said this they both came flying down and settled on Cinderella's shoulders, one on the right and one on the left, and they remained perched there.

When the wedding was going to take place, the two false sisters came and wanted to curry favor with her and take part in her good fortune. As the bridal party was going to the church, the elder was on the right side, the younger on the left, and the doves picked out one of the eyes of each of them.

Afterwards when they were coming out of the church, the elder was on the left, the younger on the right, and the doves picked out the other eye of each of them. And so for their wickedness and falseness they were punished with blindness for the rest of their days.

SNOW-WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

ONCE UPON a time in the middle of winter, when the snowflakes were falling like feathers from the sky, a queen sat at her window working, and her embroidery frame was of ebony. And as she worked, gaz-

ing at times out on the snow, she pricked her finger, and there fell from it three drops of blood on the snow. And when she saw how bright and red it looked, she said to herself, "Oh, that I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood of the embroidery frame!"

Not very long afterwards she had a daughter, with a skin as white as snow, lips as red as blood, and hair as black as ebony, and she was named Snow-White. And when she was born the Queen died.

After a year had gone by, the King took another wife, a beautiful woman, but proud and overbearing, and she could not bear to be surpassed in beauty by anyone. She had a magic looking glass, and she used to stand before it and look in it and say:

*"Looking glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"*

And the looking glass would answer:

"You are fairest of them all."

And she was contented, for she knew that the looking glass spoke the truth.

Now Snow-White was growing prettier and prettier, and when she was seven years old she was as beautiful as day, far more so than the Queen herself. So one day when the Queen went to her mirror and said:

*"Looking glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"*

It answered:

*"Queen, you are full fair, 'tis true,
But Snow-White fairer is than you."*

This gave the Queen a great shock, and she became yellow and green with envy, and from that hour her heart turned against Snow-White and she hated her. And envy and pride like ill weeds grew higher in her heart every day until she had no peace day or night.

At last she sent for a huntsman and said, "Take the child out into the woods, so that I may set eyes on her no more. You must put her to death and bring me her heart for a token."

The huntsman consented and led her away. But when he drew his cutlass to pierce Snow-White's innocent heart, she began to weep and to say, "Oh, dear huntsman, do not take my life. I will go away into the wildwood and never come home again."

And as she was so lovely the huntsman had pity on her and said, "Away with you then, poor child."

He thought the wild animals would be sure to devour her, and it was as if a stone had been rolled away from his heart when he was spared putting her to death.

Just at that moment a young wild boar came running by, so he caught and killed it. And taking out its heart, he brought it to the Queen for a token. And it was salted and cooked and the wicked woman ate it up, thinking that there was an end of Snow-White.

Now when the poor child found herself quite alone in the wild woods, she felt full of terror, even of the very leaves on the trees, and she did not know what to do for fright. Then she began to run over the sharp stones and through the thorn bushes, and the wild beasts ran about her but they did her no harm. She ran as long as her feet would carry her. And when the evening drew near she came to a little house and she went inside to rest. Everything there was very small, but as pretty and clean as possible. There stood a little table, ready laid. It was covered with a white cloth and seven little plates, and seven knives and forks, and drinking cups. By the wall stood seven little beds side by side, covered with clean white quilts.

Snow-White, being very hungry and thirsty, ate from each plate a little porridge and bread, and drank out of each little cup a drop of wine, so as not to finish up any one portion. After that she felt so tired that she lay down in turn on each of the beds, but none of them seemed to suit her. One was too long, another too short; but at last the seventh was quite right, and so she lay down upon it, committed herself to heaven, and fell asleep.

When it was quite dark, the masters of the house came home. They were seven dwarfs whose work it was to dig underground among the mountains. When they had lighted their seven candles and it was quite light in the little house, they saw that someone must have been in, as everything was not in the same order in which they left it.

The first said, "Who has been sitting in my little chair?"

The second said, "Who has been eating from my little plate?"

The third said, "Who has been taking from my little loaf?"

The fourth said, "Who has been tasting my porridge?"

The fifth said, "Who has been using my little fork?"

The sixth said, "Who has been cutting with my little knife?"

The seventh said, "Who has been drinking from my little cup?"

Then the first one, looking round, saw a hollow in his bed and cried, "Who has been lying on my bed?"

And the others came running and cried, "Someone has been on our beds too!"

But when the seventh looked at his bed, he saw little Snow-White lying there asleep. Then he told the others, who came running up, cry-

ing out in their astonishment and holding up their seven little candles to throw a light upon Snow-White.

"Goodness gracious!" they cried. "What beautiful child is this?" And they were so full of joy to see her that they did not wake her, but let her sleep on. And the seventh dwarf slept with his comrades, an hour at a time with each, until the night had passed.

When it was morning, and Snow-White awoke and saw the seven dwarfs, she was very frightened. But they seemed quite friendly and asked her what her name was, and she told them. Then they asked her how she came to be in their house. And she related to them how her stepmother had wished her to be put to death, and how the huntsman had spared her life, and how she had run the whole day long until at last she had found their little house.

Then the dwarfs said, "If you will keep our house for us, and cook, and wash, and make the beds, and sew and knit, and keep everything tidy and clean, you may stay with us, and you shall lack nothing."

"With all my heart," said Snow-White. And so she stayed and kept the house in good order. In the morning the dwarfs went to the mountain to dig for gold. In the evening they came home, and their supper had to be ready for them.

All the day long the maiden was left alone, and the good little dwarfs warned her, saying, "Beware of your stepmother! She will soon know you are here. Let no one into the house."

Now the Queen, having eaten Snow-White's heart, as she supposed, felt quite sure that now she was the first and fairest, and so she came to her mirror and said:

*"Looking glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"*

And the glass answered:

*"Queen, thou art of beauty rare,
But Snow-White living in the glen
With the seven little men
Is a thousand times more fair."*

Then she was very angry, for the glass always spoke the truth, and she knew that the huntsman must have deceived her and that Snow-White must still be living. And she thought and thought how she could manage to make an end of her, for as long as she was not the fairest in the land, envy left her no rest. At last she thought of a plan. She painted her face and dressed herself like an old peddler woman, so that no one would have known her. In this disguise she went across the seven mountains, until she came to the house of the seven little dwarfs.

And she knocked at the door and cried, "Fine wares to sell! Fine wares to sell!"

Snow-White peeped out of the window and cried, "Good day, good woman, what have you to sell?"

"Good wares, fine wares," answered she. "Laces of all colors." And she held up a piece that was woven of many-colored silk.

"I need not be afraid of letting in this good woman," thought Snow-White, and she unbarred the door and bought the pretty lace.

"What a figure you are, child!" said the old woman. "Come and let me lace your bodice properly for once."

Snow-White, suspecting nothing, stood up before her and let her lace her with the new lace. But the old woman laced so quickly and tightly that it took Snow-White's breath away, and she fell down as dead.

"Now you are no longer the fairest," said the old woman as she hastened away.

Not long after that, towards evening, the seven dwarfs came home, and they were terrified to see their dear Snow-White lying on the ground without life or motion. They raised her up, and when they saw how tightly the lace was drawn, they cut it in two. Then she began to draw breath, and little by little she returned to life.

When the dwarfs heard what had happened they said, "The old peddler woman was no other than the wicked Queen. You must beware of letting anyone in when we are not here!"

And when the wicked woman got home she went to her glass and said.

*"Looking glass against the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"*

And it answered as before:

*"Queen, thou art of beauty rare,
But Snow-White living in the glen
With the seven little men
Is a thousand times more fair."*

When she heard that, she was so struck with surprise that all the blood left her heart, for she knew that Snow-White must still be living.

"But now," said she. "I will think of something that will be her ruin." And by witchcraft she made a poisoned comb. Then she dressed herself up to look like another and different sort of old woman.

So she went across the seven mountains and came to the house of the seven dwarfs, and knocked at the door and cried, "Good wares to sell! good wares to sell!"

Snow-White looked out and said, "Go away, I must not let anybody in."

"But you are not forbidden to look," said the old woman, taking out the poisoned comb and holding it up. It pleased the poor child so much that she was tempted to open the door. And when the bargain was made the old woman said, "Now for once your hair shall be properly combed."

Poor Snow-White, thinking no harm, let the old woman do as she would, but no sooner was the comb put in her hair than the poison began to work, and the poor girl fell down senseless.

"Now, you paragon of beauty," said the wicked woman, "this is the end of you!" And she went off.

By good luck it was now near evening and the seven little dwarfs came home. When they saw Snow-White lying on the ground as dead, they thought directly that it was the stepmother's doing. They looked about and found the poisoned comb, and no sooner had they drawn it out of her hair than Snow-White came to herself and related all that had passed. Then they warned her once more to be on her guard, and never again to let anyone in at the door.

And the Queen went home and stood before the looking glass and said:

*"Looking glass against the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"*

And the looking glass answered as before:

*"Queen, thou art of beauty rare,
But Snow-White living in the glen
With the seven little men
Is a thousand times more fair."*

When she heard the looking glass speak thus she trembled and shook with anger.

"Snow-White shall die," cried she, "though it should cost me my own life!"

And then she went to a secret lonely chamber where no one was likely to come, and there she made a poisonous apple. It was beautiful to look upon, being white with red cheeks, so that anyone who should see it must long for it, but whoever ate even a little bit of it must die. When the apple was ready, she painted her face and clothed herself like a peasant woman, and went across the seven mountains to where the seven dwarfs lived.

And when she knocked at the door Snow-White put her head out of the window and said, "I dare not let anybody in. The seven dwarfs told me not to."

"All right," answered the woman. "I can easily get rid of my apples elsewhere. There, I will give you one."

"No," answered Snow-White. "I dare not take it."

"Are you afraid of poison?" said the woman. "Look here, I will cut the apple in two pieces. You shall have the red side. I will have the white one."

The apple was so cunningly made that all of the poison was in the rosy half of it. Snow-White longed for the beautiful apple. And as she saw the peasant woman eating a piece of it she could no longer refrain, but stretched out her hand and took the poisoned half. But no sooner had she taken a morsel of it into her mouth than she fell to the earth as dead.

And the Queen, casting on her a terrible glance, laughed aloud and cried, "As white as snow, as red as blood, as black as ebony! This time the dwarfs will not be able to bring you to life again."

When she went home and asked the looking glass:

*"Looking glass against the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"*

—at last it answered, "You are the fairest now of all."

Then her envious heart had peace, as much as an envious heart can have.

The dwarfs, when they came home in the evening, found Snow-White lying on the ground, and there came no breath out of her mouth, and she was dead. They lifted her up, sought if anything poisonous was to be found, cut her laces, combed her hair, washed her with water and wine, but all was of no avail. The poor child was dead, and remained dead. Then they laid her on a bier, and all seven of them sat around it, and wept and lamented three whole days. And then they would have buried her, except that she still looked as if she were living, with her beautiful blooming cheeks. So they said, "We cannot hide her away in the black ground."

And they had made a coffin of clear glass, that could be looked into from all sides. They laid her in it and wrote upon it in golden letters her name, and that she was a king's daughter. Then they set the coffin out upon the mountain and one of them always remained by it to watch. And the birds came too and mourned for Snow-White: first an owl, then a raven, and last, a dove.

Now for a long while Snow-White lay in the coffin and never changed, but looked as if she were asleep, for she was still as white as snow, as red as blood, and her hair was as black as ebony. It happened, however, that one day a king's son rode through the wood and up to the dwarfs' house, which was near it. He saw on the mountain the coffin,

and beautiful Snow-White within it, and he read what was written in golden letters upon it.

Then he said to the dwarfs, "Let me have the coffin, and I will give you whatever you like to ask for it."

But the dwarfs told him that they could not part with it for all the gold in the world.

But he said, "I beseech you to give it to me, for I cannot live without looking upon Snow-White. If you consent, I will bring you to great honor and care for you as if you were my brethren."

When he pleaded, the good little dwarfs had pity upon him and gave him the coffin, and the King's son called his servants and bid them carry it away on their shoulders. Now it happened that as they were going along they stumbled over a bush, and with the shaking the bit of poisoned apple flew out of her throat. It was not long before she opened her eyes, threw up the cover of the coffin, and sat up, alive and well. "Oh dear, where am I?" cried she.

The King's son answered, full of joy, "You are near me." And relating all that had happened, he said, "I would rather have you than anything in the world. Come with me to my father's castle and you shall be my bride."

And Snow-White was kind and went with him, and their wedding was held with pomp and great splendor.

But Snow-White's wicked stepmother was also bidden to the feast. And when she had dressed herself in beautiful clothes she went to her looking glass and said:

*"Looking glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"*

'The looking glass answered:

*"O Queen, although you are of beauty rare,
The young bride is a thousand times more fair."*

Then she railed and cursed, and was beside herself with disappointment and anger. First she thought she would not go to the wedding, but then she felt she should have no peace until she went and saw the bride. And when she saw her she knew her for Snow-White and could not stir from the place for anger and terror. For they had ready red-hot iron shoes, in which she had to dance until she fell down dead.

THE ELVES AND THE SHOEMAKER

THERE WAS once a shoemaker who through no fault of his own had become so poor that at last he had only leather enough left for one pair of shoes. At evening he cut out the shoes which he intended to begin upon the next morning, and since he had a good conscience, he lay down quietly, said his prayers, and fell asleep.

In the morning, when he had said his prayers and was preparing to sit down to work, he found the pair of shoes standing finished on his table. He was amazed and could not understand it in the least.

He took the shoes in his hand to examine them more closely. They were so neatly sewn that not a stitch was out of place, and were as good as the work of a master hand.

Soon afterwards a purchaser came in and, as he was much pleased with the shoes, he paid more than the ordinary price for them, so that the shoemaker was able to buy leather for two pairs of shoes with the money.

He cut them out in the evening, and the next day with fresh courage was about to go to work. But he had no need to, for when he got up the shoes were finished, and buyers were not lacking. These gave him so much money that he was able to buy leather for four pairs of shoes.

Early next morning he found the four pairs finished, and so it went on. What he cut out at evening was finished in the morning, so that he was soon again in comfortable circumstances and became a well-to-do man.

Now it happened one evening not long before Christmas, when he had cut out some shoes as usual, that he said to his wife, "How would it be if we were to sit up tonight to see who it is that lends us such a helping hand?"

The wife agreed and lighted a candle, and they hid themselves in the corner of the room behind the clothes which were hanging there. At midnight came two little naked men who sat down at the shoemaker's table, took up the cut-out work, and began with their tiny fingers to stitch, sew, and hammer so neatly and quickly that the shoemaker could not believe his eyes. They did not stop till everything was quite finished and stood complete on the table. Then they ran swiftly away.

The next day the wife said, "The little men have made us rich, and we ought to show our gratitude. They were running about with nothing on, and must freeze with cold. Now I will make them little shirts, coats, waistcoats, and hose, and will even knit them a pair of stockings. And you shall make them each a pair of shoes."

The husband agreed. And at evening, when they had everything ready, they laid out the presents on the table and hid themselves to see how the little men would behave.

At midnight they came skipping in and were about to set to work. But instead of the leather ready cut out, they found the charming little clothes.

At first they were surprised, then excessively delighted. With the greatest speed they put on and smoothed down the pretty clothes, singing:

*"Now we're boys so fine and neat,
Why cobble more for others' feet?"*

Then they hopped and danced about, and leapt over chairs and tables and out the door. Henceforward they came back no more, but the shoemaker fared well as long as he lived, and had good luck in all his undertakings.

THE STRAW, THE COAL, AND THE BEAN

IN A VILLAGE dwelt a poor old woman, who had gathered together a dish of beans and wanted to cook them. So she made a fire on her hearth, and that it might burn the quicker, she lighted it with a handful of straw. When she was emptying the beans into the pan, one dropped without her observing it, and lay on the ground beside a straw, and soon afterwards a burning coal from the fire leapt down to the two. Then the straw began and said, "Dear friends, from whence do you come here?" The coal replied, "I fortunately sprang out of the fire, and if I had not escaped by main force, my death would have been certain—I should have been burned to ashes." The bean said, "I too have escaped with a whole skin, but if the old woman had got me into the pan, I should have been made into broth without any mercy, like my comrades." "And would a better fate have fallen to my lot?" said the straw. "The old woman has destroyed all my brethren in fire and smoke; she seized sixty of them at once, and took their lives. I luckily slipped through her fingers."

"But what are we to do now?" said the coal.

"I think," answered the bean, "that as we have so fortunately escaped death, we should keep together like good companions, and lest a new mischance should overtake us here, we should go away together, and repair to a foreign country."

The proposition pleased the two others, and they set out on their way in company. Soon, however, they came to a little brook, and as there was no bridge or foot-plank, they did not know how they were to get over it. The straw hit on a good idea, and said, "I will lay myself straight across, and then you can walk over on me as on a bridge." The straw therefore stretched itself from one bank to the other, and the coal, who was of an impetuous disposition, tripped quite boldly on to the newly built bridge. But when she had reached the middle, and heard the water rushing beneath her, she was, after all, afraid, and stood still, and ventured no farther. The straw, however, began to burn, broke in two pieces, and fell into the stream. The coal slipped after her, hissed when she got into the water, and breathed her last. The bean, who had prudently stayed behind on the shore, could not but laugh at the event, was unable to stop, and laughed so heartily that she burst. It would have been all over with her, likewise, if, by good fortune, a tailor who was traveling in search of work had not sat down to rest by the brook. As he had a compassionate heart he pulled out his needle and thread, and sewed her together. The bean thanked him most prettily, but as the tailor used black thread, all beans since then have a black seam.

FUNDEVOGEL.

THERE WAS once a forester who went into the woods to hunt. and he heard a cry like that of a little child. He followed the sound and at last came to a big tree where a tiny child was sitting high up on one of the top branches. The mother had gone to sleep under the tree, and a bird of prey, seeing the child on her lap, had flown down and carried it off in its beak to the top of the tree.

The forester climbed the tree and brought down the child, thinking to himself, "I will take it home, and bring it up with my own little Lina."

So he took it home, and the two children were brought up together. The foundling was called Fundevoegel, because it had been found by a bird. Fundevoegel and Lina were so fond of each other that they could not bear to be out of each other's sight.

Now the forester had an old cook, who one evening took two pails and began carrying water. She did not go once but many times, backwards and forwards to the well.

Lina saw this and said, "Dear me, Sanna, why are you carrying so much water?"

“If you will not tell anyone, I will tell you why.”

Lina said no, she would not tell anyone.

So then the cook said, “Tomorrow morning early, when the forester goes out hunting, I am going to boil the water. And when it bubbles in the kettle, I am going to throw Fundevogel into it and boil him.”

Next morning the forester got up very early and went out hunting, leaving the children still in bed.

Then said Lina to Fundevogel, “Never forsake me, and I will never forsake you.”

And Fundevogel answered, “I will never forsake you.”

Then Lina said, “I must tell you now. Old Sanna brought in so many pails of water last night that I asked her what she was doing. She said if I would not tell anybody she would tell me what it was for. So I promised not to tell anybody, and she said that in the morning, when our father had gone out hunting, she would fill the kettle, and when it was boiling she would throw you into it and boil you. Now we must get up quickly, dress ourselves, and run away.”

So the children got up, dressed quickly, and hurriedly left the house.

When the water boiled, the cook went to their bedroom to fetch Fundevogel to throw him into it. But when she entered the room and went to the bed, both the children were gone. She was terribly frightened and said to herself, “Whatever am I to say to the forester when he comes home and finds the children gone? We must hurry after them and get them back.” So the cook dispatched three menservants to catch up with the children and bring them back.

The children were sitting near a wood, and when they saw the three men a great way off, Lina said to Fundevogel, “Do not forsake me, and I will never forsake you.”

And Fundevogel answered, “I will never forsake you as long as I live.”

Then Lina said, “You must turn into a rosebush, and I will be a rosebud upon it.”

When the three men reached the wood, they found nothing but a rosebush with one rosebud on it. No children were to be seen. They said to each other, “There is nothing to be done here.”

So they went home and told the cook that they had seen nothing whatever but a rosebush with only one rosebud on it.

The old cook scolded them and said, “You boobies, you ought to have hacked the rosebush to pieces, broken off the bud, and brought it home to me. Off with you at once and do it.” So they had to start off again on their search.

But the children saw them a long way off and Lina said to Fundevogel, “Do not forsake me, and I will never forsake you.”

Fundevogel promised, "I will never forsake you as long as I live."

Then said Lina, "You must become a church, and I will be the chandelier in it."

Now when the three men came up they found nothing but a church with a chandelier in it. And they said to each other, "What are we to do here? We had better go home again."

When they reached the house, the cook asked if they had not found anything. They said, "Nothing but a church with a chandelier in it."

"You fools!" screamed the cook. "Why did you not destroy the church and bring me the chandelier?" Then the old cook put her best foot foremost and started herself with the three men in pursuit of the children.

But the children saw the three men in the distance, and the old cook waddling behind them. Then said Lina, "Fundevogel, do not forsake me, and I will never forsake you."

Again he promised, "I will never forsake you as long as I live."

Lina said, "You must become a pond, and I will be the duck swimming upon it."

When the cook reached the pond, she lay down beside it to drink it up, but the duck swam quickly forward, seized her head with his bill, and dragged her under water. So the old witch was drowned.

Then the children went home together as happy as possible, and if they are not dead yet then they are still alive.

KARL KATZ

IN THE MIDST of the Hartz forests there is a high mountain of which the neighbors tell all sorts of stories: how the goblins and fairies dance on it by night, and how the old Emperor Redbeard holds his court there and sits on his marble throne, with his long beard sweeping on the ground.

A great many years ago there lived in a village at the foot of this mountain, one Karl Katz. Now Karl was a goatherd, and every morning he drove his flock to feed upon the green spots that are here and there found on the mountainside. In the evening he sometimes thought it too late to drive his charges home, so then he would shut them up in a spot in the woods, where the old ruined walls of some castle that had long ago been deserted were left standing. They were high enough to form a fold, in which he could count his goats and let them rest for the night.

One evening he found that the prettiest goat of his flock had vanished soon after they were driven into this fold. He searched everywhere for it in vain but, to his surprise and delight, when he counted his flock in the morning what should he see but his lost goat! Again and again the same thing happened.

At last he thought he would watch still more narrowly. And having looked carefully over the old walls, he found a narrow doorway through which it seemed that his favorite made her way. Karl followed and found a path leading downwards through a cleft in the rocks. On he went, scrambling as well as he could, down the side of the rock and at last came to the mouth of a cave, where he lost sight of his goat. Just then he saw that his faithful dog was not with him. He whistled but no dog was there. He was therefore forced to go into the cave and try to find his goat by himself.

He groped his way for a while and at last came to a place where a little light found its way in. And there he wondered not a little to find his goat employing itself, very much at its ease in the cavern, in eating corn which kept dropping from some place over its head. He went up and looked about him to see where all this corn, that rattled about his ears like a hailstorm, could come from, but all overhead was dark and he could find no clew to this strange business.

At last, as he stood listening, he thought he heard the neighing and stamping of horses. He listened again; it was plainly so. And after a while he was sure that horses were feeding above him and that the corn fell from their mangers. What could these horses be, which were thus kept in the clefts of rocks where none but the goat's foot ever trod? There must be people of some sort or other living here, and who could they be? Was it safe to trust himself in such company? Karl pondered awhile but his wonder only grew greater and greater, when of a sudden he heard his own name, "Karl Katz!" echo through the cavern. He turned round, but could see nothing. "Karl Katz!" again sounded sharply in his ears. And soon out came a little dwarfish page with a high-peaked hat and a scarlet cloak, from a dark corner at one end of the cave.

The dwarf nodded and beckoned him to follow. Karl thought he should first like to know a little about who it was that thus sought his company. He asked, but the dwarf shook his head, answering not a word, and again beckoned him to follow. He did so, and winding his way through ruins he soon heard rolling overhead what sounded like peals of thunder echoing among the rocks. The noise grew louder and louder as he went on, and at last he came to a courtyard surrounded by old ivy-grown walls. The spot seemed to be the bosom of a little valley. Above rose on every hand high masses of rock. Wide-branching

trees threw their arms overhead so that nothing but a glimmering twilight made its way through. And here on the cool smooth-shaven turf Karl saw twelve strange old figures amusing themselves very sedately with a game of ninepins.

Their dress did not seem altogether strange to Karl, for in the church of the town whither he went every week to market there was an old monument, with figures of queer old knights upon it, dressed in the very same fashion. Not a word fell from any of their lips. They moved about soberly and gravely, each taking his turn at the game; but the oldest of them ordered Karl Katz, by dumb signs, to busy himself in setting up the pins as they knocked them down. At first his knees trembled, and he hardly dared snatch a stolen sidelong glance at the long beards and old-fashioned dresses of the worthy knights. But he soon saw that as each knight played out his game he went to his seat and there took a hearty draught at a flagon, which the dwarf kept filled and which sent up the smell of the richest old wine.

Little by little Karl got bolder, and at last he plucked up his heart so far as to beg the dwarf, by signs, to let him too take his turn at the flagon. The dwarf gave it him with a grave bow, and Karl thought he never had tasted anything half so good before. This gave him new strength for his work, and as often as he flagged at all he turned to the same kind friend for help in his need.

Which was tired first, he or the knights, Karl never could tell, or whether the wine got the better of his head. What he knew was that sleep at last overpowered him, and that when he awoke he found himself stretched out upon the old spot within the walls where he had folded his flock, and saw that the bright sun was high up in the heavens. The same green turf was spread beneath, and the same tottering ivy-clad walls surrounded him. He rubbed his eyes and called his dog, but neither dog nor goat was to be seen. And when he looked about him again, the grass seemed to be longer under his feet than it was yesterday. And trees hung over his head, which he had either never seen before or had quite forgotten. Shaking his head and hardly knowing whether he was in his right mind, he got up and stretched himself. Somehow or other his joints felt stiffer than they were. "It serves me right," said he. "This comes of sleeping out of one's own bed." Little by little he recollected his evening's sport and licked his lips as he thought of the charming wine he had taken so much of. "But who," thought he, "can those people be that come to this odd place to play ninepins?"

His first step was to look for the doorway through which he had followed his goat, but to his astonishment not the least trace of an opening of any sort was to be seen. There stood the wall, without chink or crack

big enough for a rat to pass through. Again he paused and scratched his head. His hat was full of holes. "Why, it was new last Shrovetide!" said he. By chance his eyes fell next on his shoes, which were almost new when he last left home. But now they looked so old that they were likely to fall to pieces before he could get home. All his clothes seemed in the same sad plight. The more he looked, the more he pondered, and the more he was at a loss to know what could have happened to him.

At length he turned round and left the old walls to look for his flock. Slow and out of heart he wound his way among the mountain steepes, through paths where his flocks were wont to wander. Still not a goat was to be seen. Again he whistled and called his dog, but no dog came. Below him in the plain lay the village where his home was, so at length he took the downward path and set out with a heavy heart and a faltering step in search of his flock.

"Surely," said he, "I shall soon meet some neighbor who can tell me where my goats are." But the people who met him as he drew near to the village were all unknown to him. They were not even dressed as his neighbors were, and they seemed as if they hardly spoke the same tongue. When he eagerly asked each, as he came up, after his goats, they only stared at him and stroked their chins. At last he did the same too—and what was his wonder to find that his beard was grown at least a foot long!

"The world," said he to himself, "is surely turned upside down. If not, I must be bewitched." Yet he knew the mountain, as he turned round again and looked back on its woody heights. And he knew the houses and cottages also, with their little gardens, as he entered the village. All were where he had always known them to be. And he heard some children, too (as a traveler that passed by was asking his way), call the village by the very same name he had always known it to bear.

Again he shook his head and went straight through the village to his own cottage. Alas, it looked sadly out of repair. The windows were broken, the door off its hinges, and in the courtyard lay an unknown child in a ragged dress, playing with a rough, toothless old dog, whom he thought he ought to know, but who snarled and barked in his face when he called to him. He went in at the open doorway, but he found all so dreary and empty that he staggered out again like a drunken man, and called his wife and children loudly by their names. But no one heard—at least no one answered him.

A crowd of women and children soon flocked around the strange-looking man with the long gray beard, and all broke upon him at once with the questions, "Who are you?" "Who is it that you want?" It

seemed to him so odd to ask other people, at his own door, about his wife and children that, in order to get rid of the gaping crowd, he named the first man that came into his head.

"Hans the blacksmith," said he. Most held their tongues and stared, but at last an old woman said, "He went these seven years ago to a place that you will not reach today."

"Fritz the tailor, then."

"Heaven rest his soul!" said an old beldam upon crutches. "He has lain these ten years in a house that he'll never leave."

Karl Katz looked at the old woman again and shuddered, as he knew her to be one of the old gossips, but saw she had a strangely altered face. All wish to ask further questions was gone, but at last a young woman made her way through the gaping throng. She had a baby in one arm and a little girl of about three years old clinging to her other hand. All three looked the very image of his own wife.

"What is your name?" he asked wildly.

"Liese," said she.

"And your father's?"

"Karl Katz, heaven bless him!" said she. "But poor man, he is lost and gone. It is now full twenty years since we sought for him day and night on the mountain. His dog and his flock came back, but he never was heard of any more. I was then seven years old."

Poor Karl could restrain himself no longer. "I am Karl Katz and no other," said he, as he took the child from his daughter's arms and kissed it over and over again.

All stood gaping, hardly knowing what to say or think, when old Stropken the schoolmaster hobbled by and took a long and close look at him. "Karl Katz! Karl Katz!" said he slowly. "Why it is Karl Katz sure enough. There is my own mark upon him. There is the scar over his right eye that I gave him myself one day with my oak stick."

Then several others also cried out, "Yes, it is! It is Karl Katz. Welcome, neighbor, welcome home!"

"But where," said or thought all, "can an honest steady fellow like you have been these twenty years?"

And now the whole village had flocked around. The children laughed, the dogs barked, and all were glad to see neighbor Karl home alive and well. As to where he had been for the twenty years, that was a part of the story at which Karl shrugged up his shoulders. For he never could very well explain it, and he seemed to think the less that was said about it the better. But it was plain enough that what dwelt most in his memory was the noble wine that had tickled his mouth while the knights played their game of ninepins.

THE GALLANT TAILOR

ONE SUMMER MORNING a little tailor was sitting at his bench near the window, working cheerfully with all his might, when an old woman came down the street.

She was crying, "Good jelly to sell! Good jelly to sell!"

The cry sounded pleasant in the little tailor's ears, so he put his head out of the window and called out, "Here, my good woman! Come here, if you want a customer."

So the poor woman climbed the steps with her heavy basket, and was obliged to unpack and display all her pots to the tailor. He looked at every one of them and, lifting all the lids, applied his nose to each

At last he said, "The jelly seems pretty good. You may weigh me out four half ounces, or I don't mind having a quarter of a pound."

The woman, who had expected to find a good customer, gave him what he asked for but went off angry and grumbling.

"This jelly is the very thing for me!" cried the little tailor. "It will give me strength and cunning." And he took down the bread from the cupboard, cut a big slice off the loaf and spread the jelly on it, laid it near him, and went on stitching more gallantly than ever. All the while the scent of the sweet jelly was spreading throughout the room, where there were quantities of flies. They were attracted by it and flew down to eat of it.

"Now then, who invited you here?" said the tailor, and drove the unbidden guests away. But the flies, not understanding his language, were not to be got rid of like that, and returned in larger numbers than before. Then the tailor, unable to stand it any longer, took from his chimney corner a ragged cloth.

"Now, I'll let you have it!" he said, and beat it among them unmercifully. When he ceased and counted the slain, he found seven lying dead before him.

"This is indeed something," he said, wondering at his own bravery. "The whole town shall know about this."

So he hastened to cut out a belt, and he stitched it and put on it in large capitals: "Seven at one blow!"

"The town, did I say?" said the little tailor. "The whole world shall know it!" And his heart quivered with joy, like a lamb's tail.

The tailor fastened the belt round him and began to think of going out into the world, for his workshop seemed too small for his valor. So he looked about in all the house for something that would be useful to take with him, but he found nothing but an old cheese, which he put in

his pocket. Outside the door he noticed that a bird had got caught in the bushes, so he took that and put it in his pocket with the cheese. Then he set out gallantly on his way, and as he was light and active he felt no fatigue.

The way led over a mountain, and when he reached the topmost peak he saw a terrible giant sitting there, and looking about him at his ease.

The tailor went bravely up to him, called out to him, and said, "Good day, comrade! There you sit looking over the wide world. I am on the way thither to seek my fortune. Have you a fancy to go with me?"

The giant looked at the tailor contemptuously and said, "You vagabond! You miserable little creature!"

"That may be," answered the little tailor, and undoing his coat he showed the giant his belt. "You can read there whether I am a man or not."

The giant read, "Seven at one blow!" And thinking it meant men that the tailor had killed, he at once felt more respect for the little fellow. But as he wanted to prove him, he took up a stone and squeezed it so hard that water came out of it.

"Now we can do that," said the giant, "that is, if you have the strength for it."

"That's not much!" said the little tailor. "I call that play." And he put his hand in his pocket and took out the cheese and squeezed it till the whey ran out of it.

"Well," said he, "what do you think of that?"

The giant did not know what to say, for he could not have believed it of the little man. Then the giant took a stone and threw it so high that it was nearly out of sight.

"Now, little fellow, suppose you do that!"

"Well thrown!" said the tailor. "But the stone fell back to earth again. I will throw you one that will never come back." So he felt in his pocket, took out the bird, and threw it into the air. And the bird, when it found itself at liberty, took wing, flew off, and returned no more.

"What do you think of that, comrade?" asked the tailor.

"There is no doubt that you can throw," said the giant. "Now we will see if you can carry."

He led the little tailor to a mighty oak tree which had been felled and was lying on the ground, and said, "Now, if you are strong enough, help me to carry this tree out of the wood."

"Willingly," answered the little man. "You take the trunk on your shoulders and I will take the branches with all their foliage. That is by far the biggest end."

So the giant took the trunk on his shoulders, and the tailor seated

himself on a branch. And the giant, who could not see what he was doing, had the whole tree to carry, and the little man on it as well. And the little man was very cheerful and merry and whistled the tune, "*There were three tailors riding by,*" as if carrying the tree were mere child's play.

The giant, when he had struggled on under his heavy load a part of the way, was tired out and cried, "Look here, I must let go the tree!"

The tailor jumped off quickly. Then, taking hold of the tree with both arms as if he were carrying it, he said to the giant, "You see you can't carry the tree, though you are such a big fellow!"

They went on together a little farther and presently they came to a cherry tree. And the giant took hold of the topmost branches, where the ripest fruit hung, and pulling them downward gave them to the tailor to hold, bidding him eat. But the little tailor was much too weak to hold the tree, and as the giant let go, the tree sprang back and the tailor was thrown up into the air.

And when he dropped down again without any damage, the giant said to him, "How is this? Haven't you strength enough to hold such a weak sprig as that?"

"It is not strength that is lacking," answered the little tailor. "How should it to one who has slain seven at one blow? I just jumped over the tree because the hunters are shooting down there in the bushes. Why don't you jump it too, if you can."

The giant made the attempt and, not being able to vault the tree, he remained hanging in the branches, so that once more the little tailor got the better of him.

Then said the giant, "As you are such a gallant fellow, suppose you come with me to our den and stay the night."

The tailor was quite willing and followed him. When they reached the den, there sat some other giants by the fire and all gladly welcomed him.

The little tailor looked round and thought, "There is more elbow room here than in my workshop."

The giant showed him a bed and told him he had better lie down on it and go to sleep. The bed, however, was too big for the tailor, so he did not stay in it but crept into a corner to sleep. As soon as it was midnight the giant got up, took a great staff of iron and beat the bed through with one stroke, and supposed he had made an end of that grasshopper of a tailor. Very early in the morning the giants went into the wood and forgot all about the little tailor, and when they saw him coming after them alive and merry, they were terribly frightened. And thinking he was going to kill them, they ran away in all haste.

So the little tailor marched on, always following his nose. And after he had gone a great way he entered the courtyard belonging to a king's palace, and there he felt so overpowered with fatigue that he lay down and fell asleep. In the meanwhile came various people, who looked at him curiously and read on his belt, "Seven at one blow!"

"Oh," said they, "why should this great lord come here in time of peace? What a mighty champion he must be!"

Then they went and told the King about him. They thought that if war should break out what a worthy and useful man he would be, and he ought not to be allowed to depart at any price. The King then summoned his council and sent one of his courtiers to the little tailor to beg him, so soon as he should wake up, to consent to serve in the King's army. So the messenger stood and waited at the sleeper's side until he began to stretch his limbs and to open his eyes, and then he carried his answer back.

"That was the reason for which I came," the little tailor had said. "I am ready to enter the King's service."

So he was received into it very honorably, and a separate dwelling was set apart for him.

But the rest of the soldiers were very much set against the little tailor, and wished him a thousand miles away.

"What shall be done about it?" they said among themselves. "If we pick a quarrel and fight with him, then seven of us will fall at each blow. That will be of no good to us."

So they came to a resolution, and went all together to the King to ask for their discharge.

"We never intended," said they, "to serve with a man who kills seven at a blow."

The King felt sorry to lose all his faithful servants because of one man. He wished that he had never seen him, and would willingly get rid of him if he might. But he did not dare to dismiss the little tailor for fear he should kill all the King's people and place himself upon the throne. He thought a long while about it, and at last made up his mind what to do.

He sent for the little tailor and told him that as he was so great a warrior he had a proposal to make to him. He told him that in a wood in his dominions dwelt two giants who did great damage by robbery, murder, and fire, and that no man dared go near them for fear of his life. But that if the tailor should overcome and slay both these giants the King would give him his only daughter in marriage and half his kingdom as dowry, and that a hundred horsemen should go with him to give him assistance.

"That would be a fine thing for a man like me," thought the little tailor. "A beautiful princess and half a kingdom are not to be had every day."

So he said to the King, "Oh yes, I can soon overcome the giants, and yet I have no need of the hundred horsemen. He who can kill seven at one blow has no need to be afraid of two."

So the little tailor set out and the hundred horsemen followed him.

When he came to the border of the wood he said to his escort, "Stay here while I go to attack the giants."

Then he sprang into the wood and looked about him right and left. After a while he caught sight of the two giants. They were lying down under a tree asleep, and snoring so that all the branches shook. The little tailor, all alert, filled both his pockets with stones and climbed up into the tree, and made his way to an overhanging bough so that he could seat himself just above the sleepers. And from there he let one stone after another fall on the chest of one of the giants.

For a long time the giant was quite unaware of this, but at last he waked up and pushed his comrade and said, "What are you hitting me for?"

"Are you dreaming?" said the other. "I am not touching you." And they composed themselves again to sleep, and the tailor let fall a stone on the other giant.

"What can that be?" cried he. "What are you casting at me?"

"I am casting nothing at you," answered the first, grumbling.

They disputed about it for a while, but as they were tired they gave it up at last, and their eyes closed once more. Then the little tailor began his game anew. He picked out a heavier stone and threw it down with force upon the first giant's chest.

"This is too much!" cried he, and sprang up like a madman and struck his companion such a blow that the tree shook above them. The other paid him back with ready coin, and they fought with such fury that they tore up trees by their roots to use for weapons against each other, so that at last both of them lay dead upon the ground. And now the little tailor got down.

"What a lucky thing," he said, "that the tree I was sitting in did not get torn up, too! Or else I should have had to jump like a squirrel from one tree to another."

Then he drew his sword and gave each of the giants a few hacks in the breast, and went back to the horsemen and said, "The deed is done. I have made an end of both of them, though it went hard with me. In the struggle they rooted up trees to defend themselves, but it was of no use. They had to do with a man who can kill seven at one blow."

"Then are you not wounded?" asked the horsemen.

"Nothing of the sort!" answered the tailor. "They have not injured a hair."

The horsemen still would not believe it and rode into the wood to see, and there they found the giants wallowing in their blood, and all about them the uprooted trees.

The little tailor then claimed the promised boon, but the King repented of his offer and again sought how to rid himself of the hero.

"Before you can possess my daughter and the half of my kingdom," said he to the tailor, "you must perform another heroic act. In the wood lives a unicorn who does great damage. You must capture him."

"A unicorn does not strike more terror into me than two giants. Seven at one blow! That is my way," was the tailor's answer.

So taking a rope and an ax with him, he went out into the wood and told those who were ordered to attend him to wait outside. He had not far to seek. The unicorn soon came out and sprang at him, as if he would make an end of him without delay.

"Softly, softly!" said the tailor. "Most haste, worst speed." And he remained standing until the animal came quite near; then he slipped quietly behind a tree. The unicorn ran with all his might against the tree and stuck his horn so deep into the trunk that he could not get it out again, and so was captured.

"Now I have you," said the tailor, coming out from behind the tree. And putting the rope around the unicorn's neck, he took the ax and cut free the horn; and when all his party was assembled he led forth the animal and brought it to the King.

The King did not yet wish to give him the promised reward and set him a third task to do. Before the wedding could take place the tailor was to secure a wild boar which had done a great deal of damage in the wood.

The huntsmen were to accompany him and help him.

"All right," said the tailor. "This is child's play."

But he did not take the huntsmen into the wood, and they were all the better pleased, for the wild boar had many a time before received them in such a way that they had no fancy to disturb him.

When the boar caught sight of the tailor he ran at him with foaming mouth and gleaming tusks to bear him to the ground, but the nimble hero rushed into a chapel which chanted to be near and jumped quickly out of a window on the other side. The boar ran after him, and when he got inside the little tailor shut the door after him, and there he was imprisoned, for the creature was too big and unwieldy to jump out of the window too.

Then the tailor called the huntsmen that they might see the prisoner with their own eyes. And then he betook himself to the King, who now, whether he liked it or not, was obliged to fulfill his promise and give him his daughter and the half of his kingdom. But if he had known that the great warrior was only a little tailor he would have taken it still more to heart.

So the wedding was celebrated with great splendor and little joy, and the tailor was made into a king.

One night the young Queen heard her husband talking in his sleep and saying, "Boy, make me that waistcoat and patch me those breeches, or I will wrap my yardstick about your shoulders!"

And as she perceived of what low birth her husband was, she went to her father the next morning and told him all, and begged him to set her free from a man who was nothing better than a tailor.

The King bade her be comforted, saying, "Tonight leave your bedroom door open. My guards shall stand outside, and when he is asleep they shall come in and bind him and carry him off to a ship that will take him to the other side of the world."

So the wife felt consoled, but the King's water bearer, who had been listening all the while, went to the little tailor and disclosed to him the whole plan.

"I shall put a stop to all this," said he.

At night he lay down as usual in bed, and when his wife thought that he was asleep she got up, opened the door, and lay down again. The little tailor, who only made believe to be asleep, began to murmur plainly.

"Boy, make me that waistcoat and patch me those breeches, or I will wrap my yardstick about your shoulders! I have slain seven at one blow, killed two giants, caught a unicorn, and taken a wild boar. And shall I be afraid of those who are standing outside my room door?"

And when they heard the tailor say this, a great fear seized the guards. They fled away as if they had been wild hares and none would venture to attack him.

And so the little tailor all his lifetime remained a king.

THE GOLDEN GOOSE

THERE WAS once a man who had three sons, the youngest of whom was called Simpleton. He was scorned and despised by the others and kept in the background.

The eldest son was going into the forest to cut wood, and before he started his mother gave him a nice sweet cake and a bottle of wine to take with him so that he might not suffer from hunger or thirst.

In the wood he met a little old gray man, who bade him good day and said, "Give me a bit of the cake in your pocket, and let me have a drop of your wine. I am so hungry and thirsty."

But the clever son said, "If I give you my cake and wine, I shan't have enough for myself. Be off with you!"

He left the little man standing there and went on his way. But he had not been long at work, cutting down a tree, before he made a false stroke. He dug the ax into his own arm and he was obliged to go home to have it bound.

Now this was no accident. It was brought about by the little gray man.

The second son now had to go into the forest to cut wood, and like the eldest, his mother gave him a sweet cake and a bottle of wine. In the same way the little gray man met him and asked for a piece of his cake and a drop of his wine. But the second son made the same sensible answer, "If I give you any, I shall have the less for myself. Be off and out of my way!" And he went on.

His punishment, however, was not long delayed. After a few blows at the tree, he hit his own leg and had to be carried home.

Then Simpleton said, "Let me go to cut the wood, father."

But his father said, "Your brothers have only come to harm by it. You had better leave it alone. You know nothing about it." But Simpleton begged so hard to be allowed to go that at last his father said, "Well, off you go then. You will be wiser when you have hurt yourself."

His mother gave him a cake which was mixed only with water and baked in the ashes, and a bottle of sour beer. When he reached the forest, like the others he met the little gray man.

"Give me a bit of the cake in your pocket and a drop of your wine. I am so hungry and thirsty," said the little man.

Simpleton answered, "I only have a cake baked in the ashes, and some sour beer. But if you like such fare, we will sit down and eat it together."

So they sat down. But when Simpleton pulled out his cake it was a nice sweet cake, and his sour beer was turned into good wine. So they ate and drank, and the little man said, "As you have such a good heart and are willing to share your goods, I will give you good luck. There stands an old tree. Cut it down and you will find something at the roots."

So saying, he disappeared without giving Simpleton any further directions.

Simpleton cut down the tree, and when it fell, lo and behold! a goose was sitting among the roots, and its feathers were of pure gold. He picked it up and took it with him to an inn where he meant to stay the night. The landlord had three daughters, who saw the goose and were very curious as to what kind of bird it could be, and wanted to get one of its golden feathers.

The eldest thought, "There will soon be some opportunity for me to pull out one of the feathers." And when Simpleton went outside, she took hold of its wing to pluck out a feather, but her hand stuck fast and she could not get away.

Soon afterwards, the second sister came up, meaning also to pluck out one of the golden feathers. But she had hardly touched her sister when she herself was held fast.

Finally the third one came with the same intention, but the others screamed out, "Keep away! For goodness' sake, keep away!"

But she, not knowing why she was to keep away, thought, "Why should I not be there if they are there?"

So she ran up. But as soon as she touched her sisters she had to stay hanging on to them, and they all had to pass the night like this.

In the morning, Simpleton took up the goose under his arm without noticing the three girls hanging on behind. They had to keep running behind, dodging his legs right and left.

In the middle of the fields they met the parson, who when he saw the procession cried out, "For shame, you bold girls! Why do you run after the lad like that? Do you call that proper behavior?"

Then he took hold of the hand of the youngest girl to pull her away. But no sooner had he touched her than he felt himself held fast, and he too had to run behind.

Soon afterwards the sexton came up and, seeing his master the parson treading on the heels of the three girls, cried out in amazement, "Hallo, your reverence! Where are you going so fast? Don't forget that we have a christening!" So saying, he plucked the parson by the sleeve and soon found that he could not get away.

As this party of five, one behind the other, tramped on, two peasants came along the road, carrying their hoes. The parson called them and asked them to set the sexton and himself free, but as soon as ever they touched the sexton they were held fast. So now there were seven people running behind Simpleton and his goose.

By and by they reached a town where a king ruled whose only daughter was so solemn that nothing and nobody could make her laugh. So the King had proclaimed that whoever could make her laugh should marry her.

When Simpleton heard this he took his goose, with all his following, before her, and when she saw these seven people running one behind another, she burst into fits of laughter and seemed as if she could never stop.

Thereupon Simpleton asked her in marriage. But the King did not like him for a son-in-law and made all sorts of conditions. First, he said Simpleton must bring him a man who could drink up a cellarful of wine.

Then Simpleton at once thought of the little gray man who might be able to help him, and he went out to the forest to look for him. On the very spot where the tree that he had cut down had stood, he saw a man sitting with a very sad face.

Simpleton asked him what was the matter and he answered, "I am so thirsty, and I can't quench my thirst. I hate cold water, and I have already emptied a cask of wine. But what is a drop like that on a burning stone?"

"Well, there I can help you," said Simpleton. "Come with me and you shall soon have enough to drink and to spare."

He led him to the King's cellar, and the man started upon the great casks. And he drank and drank till his sides ached, and by the end of the day the cellar was empty.

Then again Simpleton demanded his bride. But the King was annoyed that a wretched fellow called "Simpleton" should have his daughter and he made new conditions. He was now to find a man who could eat up a mountain of bread.

Simpleton did not reflect long, but went straight to the forest. And there in the selfsame place sat a man tightening a strap round his body and making a very miserable face.

He said, "I have eaten up a whole ovenful of rolls. But what is the good of that when anyone is as hungry as I am? I am never satisfied. I have to tighten my belt every day if I am not to die of hunger."

Simpleton was delighted and said, "Get up and come with me. You shall have enough to eat."

And he took him to the court, where the King had caused all the flour in the kingdom to be brought together and a huge mountain of bread to be baked. The man from the forest sat down before it and began to eat, and at the end of the day the whole mountain had disappeared.

Now for the third time Simpleton asked for his bride. But again the King tried to find an excuse, and demanded a ship which could sail on land as well as at sea.

"As soon as you sail up in it, you shall have my daughter," he said.

Simpleton went straight to the forest, and there sat the little gray

man to whom he had given his cake. The little man said, "I have eaten and drunk for you, and now I will give you the ship, too. I do it all because you were merciful to me."

Then he gave him the ship which could sail on land as well as at sea, and when the King saw it he could no longer withhold his daughter. The marriage was celebrated, and at the King's death Simpleton inherited the kingdom, and lived long and happily with his wife.

RED RIDING HOOD

ONCE UPON a time there was a sweet little maiden who was loved by all who knew her, but she was especially dear to her grandmother, who did not know how to make enough of the child. Once she gave her a little red velvet cloak. It was so becoming and she liked it so much that she would never wear anything else, and so she got the name of Red Riding Hood.

One day her mother said to her, "Come here, Red Riding Hood! Take this cake and bottle of wine to grandmother. She is weak and ill, and they will do her good. Go quickly, before it gets hot. Don't loiter by the way, nor run, or you will fall and break the bottle, and there will be no wine for grandmother. When you get there, don't forget to say 'Good morning' prettily, without staring about you."

"I will do just as you tell me," Red Riding Hood promised her mother.

Her grandmother lived away in the wood, a good half-hour from the village. When she got to the wood she met a wolf, but Red Riding Hood did not know what a wicked animal he was, so she was not a bit afraid of him.

"Good morning, Red Riding Hood," he said.

"Good morning, wolf," she answered.

"Whither away so early, Red Riding Hood?"

"To grandmother's."

"What have you got in your basket?"

"Cake and wine. We baked yesterday, so I'm taking a cake to her. She wants something to make her well."

"Where does she live, Red Riding Hood?"

"A good quarter of an hour farther into the wood. Her house stands under three big oak trees, near a hedge of nut trees which you must know," said Red Riding Hood.

The wolf thought, "This tender little creature will be a plump morsel!

She will be nicer than the old woman. I must be cunning and snap them both up."

He walked along with Red Riding Hood for a while. Then he said, "Look at the pretty flowers, Red Riding Hood. Why don't you look about you? I don't believe you even hear the birds sing. You are as solemn as if you were going to school. All else is so gay out here in the woods."

Red Riding Hood raised her eyes, and when she saw the sunlight dancing through the trees, and all the bright flowers, she thought, "I'm sure grandmother would be pleased if I took her a bunch of fresh flowers. It is still quite early. I shall have plenty of time to pick them."

So she left the path and wandered off among the trees to pick the flowers. Each time she picked one, she always saw another prettier one farther on. So she went deeper and deeper into the forest.

In the meantime the wolf went straight off to the grandmother's cottage and knocked at the door.

"Who is there?"

"Red Riding Hood, bringing you a cake and some wine. Open the door!"

"Lift the latch," called out the old woman. "I am too weak to get up."

The wolf lifted the latch and the door sprang open. He went straight in and up to the bed without saying a word, and ate up the poor old woman. Then he put on her nightdress and cap, got into bed and drew the curtains.

Red Riding Hood picked flowers till she could carry no more, and then she remembered her grandmother again. She was astonished when she got to the house to find the door open, and when she entered the room everything seemed so strange. She felt quite frightened but she did not know why. "Generally I like coming to see grandmother so much," she thought. "Good morning, grandmother," she cried. But she received no answer.

Then she went up to the bed and drew the curtain back. There lay her grandmother, but she had drawn her cap down over her face and she looked very odd.

"Oh grandmother, what big ears you have," she said.

"The better to hear you with, my dear."

"Grandmother, what big eyes you have."

"The better to see you with, my dear."

"What big hands you have, grandmother."

"The better to catch hold of you with, my dear."

"But grandmother, what big teeth you have."

"The better to eat you with, my dear."

Hardly had the wolf said this than he made a spring out of bed and swallowed poor little Red Riding Hood. When the wolf had satisfied himself he went back to bed, and he was soon snoring loudly.

A huntsman went past the house and thought, "How loudly the old lady is snoring. I must see if there is anything the matter with her."

So he went into the house and up to the bed, where he found the wolf fast asleep. "Do I find you here, you old sinner!" he said. "Long enough have I sought you!"

He raised his gun to shoot, when it just occurred to him that perhaps the wolf had eaten up the old lady, and that she might still be saved. So he took a knife and began cutting open the sleeping wolf. At the first cut he saw the little red cloak, and after a few more slashes, the little girl sprang out and cried, "Oh, how frightened I was! It was so dark inside the wolf." Next the old grandmother came out, alive but hardly able to breathe.

Red Riding Hood brought some big stones with which they filled the wolf. He woke up and tried to spring away, but the stones dragged him back and he fell down dead.

They were all quite happy now. The huntsman skinned the wolf and took the skin home. The grandmother ate the cake and drank the wine which Red Riding Hood had brought, and she soon felt quite strong. Red Riding Hood thought to herself, "I will never again wander off into the forest as long as I live, when my mother forbids it."

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN MOUNTAIN

THERE WAS once a merchant who had two children, a boy and a girl. They were both small and not old enough to run about. He had also two richly laden ships at sea, and just as he was expecting to make a great deal of money by the merchandise, news came that they had both been lost. So now instead of being a rich man he was quite poor, and had nothing left but one field near the town. To turn his thoughts from his misfortune, he went out into this field. And as he was walking up and down, a little black mannikin suddenly appeared before him and asked why he was so sad.

The merchant said, "I would tell you at once if you could help me."

"Who knows?" answered the little mannikin. "Perhaps I could help you."

Then the merchant told him that all his wealth had been lost in a wreck, and that now he had nothing left but this field.

"Don't worry yourself," said the mannikin. "If you will promise to bring me in twelve years' time the first thing which rubs against your legs when you go home, you shall have as much gold as you want."

The merchant thought, "What could it be but my dog?" He never thought of his boy, but said yes, and gave the mannikin his bond signed and sealed and went home.

When he reached the house his little son, delighted to hold on to the benches and totter towards his father, seized him by the leg to steady himself.

The merchant was horror-stricken, for his vow came into his head, and now he knew what he had promised to give away. But as he still found no gold in his chests, he thought it must only have been a joke of the mannikin's. A month later he went up into the loft to gather together some old tin to sell it, and there he found a great heap of gold on the floor. So he was soon up in the world again. He bought and sold, became a richer merchant than ever, and was altogether contented.

In the meantime the boy had grown up and he was both clever and wise. But the nearer the end of the twelve years came, the more sorrowful the merchant grew. You could even see his misery in his face. One day his son asked him what was the matter but his father would not tell him. The boy, however, persisted so long that at last he told him that he had promised, without knowing what he was doing, to give him up at the end of twelve years to a little black mannikin, in return for a quantity of gold. He had given his hand and seal on it, and the time was now near for him to go.

Then his son said, "Father, don't be frightened! It will be all right. The little mannikin has no power over me."

When the time came, the son asked a blessing of the priest, and he and his father went to the field together, and the son made a circle within which they took their places.

When the little black mannikin appeared he said to the father, "Have you brought what you promised me?"

The man was silent but his son said, "What do you want?"

The mannikin said, "My business is with your father and not with you."

The son answered, "You deceived and cheated my father. Give me back his bond."

"Oh no!" said the little man. "I won't give up my rights."

They talked to each other for a long time, and at last they decided that, as the son no longer belonged to his father and declined to belong to his foe, he should get into a boat on a flowing stream, and his father should himself push it off, thus giving him up to the stream.

So the youth took leave of his father, got into the boat, and his father

pushed it off. Then, thinking that his son was lost to him forever, he went home and sorrowed for him. The little boat, however, did not sink. It drifted quietly down the stream, and the youth sat in it in perfect safety. It drifted for a long time till at last it stuck fast on an unknown shore.

The youth landed and, seeing a beautiful castle near, walked towards it. As he passed through the door, however, a spell fell upon him. He went through all the rooms, but found them empty till he came to the very last one, where a serpent lay coiling and uncoiling itself.

The serpent was really an enchanted maiden, who was delighted when she saw the youth and said, "Have you come at last, my preserver? I have been waiting twelve years for you. This whole kingdom is bewitched and you must break the spell."

"How am I to do that?" he asked.

She said, "Tonight twelve black men hung with chains will appear, and they will ask what you are doing here. But do not speak a word, whatever they do or say to you. They will torment you, strike, and pinch you, but don't say a word. At twelve o'clock they will have to go away. On the second night twelve more will come, and on the third twenty-four. These will cut off your head. But at twelve o'clock their power goes, and if you have borne it and not spoken a word, I shall be saved. Then I will come to you and bring a little flask containing the Water of Life, with which I will sprinkle you. And you will be brought to life again as sound and well as ever you were."

'Then he said, "I will gladly save you."

Everything happened just as she had said. The black men could not force a word out of him. And on the third night the serpent became a beautiful princess, who brought the Water of Life as she had promised, and restored the youth to life. Then she fell on his neck and kissed him, and there were great rejoicings all over the castle.

Their marriage was celebrated and he became King of the Golden Mountain.

They lived happily together, and in course of time a beautiful boy was born to them.

When eight years had passed, the King's heart grew tender within him as he thought of his father, and he wanted to go home to see him. But the Queen did not want him to go.

She said, "I know it will be to my misfortune." He gave her no peace, however, till she agreed to let him go.

On his departure she gave him a wishing ring and said, "Take this ring and put it on your finger, and you will at once be at the place where you wish to be. Only you must promise never to use it to wish me away from here to be with you at your father's."

He made the promise and put the ring on his finger. He then wished himself before the town where his father lived, and at the same moment found himself at the gate. But the sentry would not let him in because his clothes, though of rich material, were of such strange cut. So he went up a mountain where a shepherd lived, and exchanging clothing with him, put on his old smock and passed into the town unnoticed.

When he reached his father he began making himself known. But his father, never thinking that it was his son, said that it was true he had once had a son, but he had long been dead. But he added, seeing that he was a poor shepherd, he would give him a plate of food.

The supposed shepherd said to his parents, "I am indeed your son. Is there no mark on my body by which you may know me?"

His mother said, "Yes, our son had a strawberry mark under his right arm."

He pushed up his shirt sleeve and there was the strawberry mark, so they no longer doubted that he was their son. He told them that he was the King of the Golden Mountain, his wife was a princess, and they had a little son seven years old.

"That can't be true," said his father. "You are a fine sort of King to come home in a tattered shepherd's smock."

His son grew angry and, without stopping to reflect, turned his ring round and wished his wife and son to appear. In a moment they both stood before him, but his wife did nothing but weep and lament, and said that he had broken his promise and so had made her very unhappy.

He said, "I have acted incautiously, but from no bad motive." And he tried to soothe her.

She appeared to be calmed, but really she nourished evil intentions towards him in her heart.

Shortly afterwards he took her outside the town to the field and showed her the stream down which he had drifted in the little boat. Then he said, "I am tired. I want to rest a little."

So she sat down, and he rested his head upon her lap and soon fell fast asleep. As soon as he was asleep, she drew the ring from his finger and drew herself gently away from him, leaving only her slipper behind. Last of all, taking her child in her arms, she wished herself back in her own kingdom. When he woke up, he found himself quite deserted. Wife and child were gone, the ring had disappeared from his finger, and only her slipper remained as a token.

"I can certainly never go home to my parents," he said. "They would say I was a sorcerer. I must go away and walk till I reach my own kingdom again."

So he went away, and at last he came to a mountain where three giants were quarreling about the division of their father's property.

When they saw him passing, they called to him and said, "Little people have sharp wits," and asked him to divide their inheritance for them.

It consisted first, of a sword, with which in one's hand, if one said, "All heads off, mine alone remain!" every head fell to the ground. Second, of a mantle which rendered anyone putting it on invisible. Third, of a pair of boots which transported the wearer to whatever place he wished.

He said, "Give me the three articles so that I may see if they are all in good condition."

So they gave him the mantle and he at once became invisible. He took his own shape again and said, "The mantle is good. Now give me the sword."

But they said, "No, we can't give you the sword. If you were to say, 'All heads off, mine alone remain!' all our heads would fall, and yours would be the only one left."

At last, however, they gave it to him on condition that he was to try it on a tree. He did as they wished, and the sword went through the tree trunk as if it had been a straw.

Then he wanted the boots but they said, "No, we won't give them away. If you were to put them on and wish yourself on the top of the mountain, we should be left standing here without anything."

"No," said he, "I won't do that."

So they gave him the boots too. But when he had all three he could think of nothing but his wife and child, and he said to himself, "Oh, if only I were on the Golden Mountain again!" And immediately he disappeared from the sight of the giants, and that was the end of their inheritance.

When he approached his castle he heard sounds of music—fiddles and flutes—and shouts of joy. People told him that his wife was celebrating her marriage with another husband.

He was filled with rage and said, "The false creature! She deceived me and deserted me when I was asleep."

He put on his mantle and went to the castle, invisible to all. Then he went into the hall, where a great feast was spread with the richest foods and the costliest wines, and the guests were joking and laughing while they ate and drank. The Queen sat on her throne in their midst in gorgeous clothing, with the crown on her head.

He placed himself behind her, and no one saw him. Whenever the Queen put a piece of meat on her plate, he took it away and ate it, and when her glass was filled he took it away and drank it. Her plate and her glass were constantly refilled, but she never had anything, for it disappeared at once. At last she grew frightened, got up, and went to her room in tears, but he followed her there too.

She said to herself, "Am I still in the power of the demon? Did my preserver never come?"

He struck her in the face and said, "Did your preserver never come? He is with you now, deceiver that you are. Did I deserve such treatment at your hands?"

Then he made himself visible, and went into the hall and cried, "The wedding is stopped. The real king has come."

The kings, princes, and nobles who were present laughed him to scorn. But he only said, "Will you go, or will you not?"

They tried to seize him, but he drew his sword and said, "All heads off, mine alone remain!"

Then all their heads fell to the ground, and he remained sole king and lord of the Golden Mountain.

THE ROBBER BRIDEGROOM

THERE WAS ONCE a miller who had a beautiful daughter. When she grew up, he wanted to have her married and settled. He thought, "If a suitable bridegroom comes and asks for my daughter, I will give her to him."

Soon afterwards a suitor came who appeared to be rich, and as the miller knew nothing against him he promised his daughter to him. The maiden, however, did not like him as a bride ought to like her bridegroom, nor had she any faith in him. Whenever she looked at him or thought about him, a shudder came over her.

One day he said to her, "You are my betrothed, and yet you have never been to see me."

The maiden answered, "I don't even know where your house is."

Then the bridegroom said, "My house is in the depths of the forest."

She made excuses and said she could not find the way.

The bridegroom answered, "Next Sunday you must come and see me without fail. I have invited some other guests, and so that you may be able to find the way I will strew some ashes to guide you."

When Sunday came and the maiden was about to start, she was frightened, though she did not know why. So that she should be sure of finding her way back she filled her pockets with peas and lentils. At the entrance to the forest she found the track of ashes and followed it, but every step or two she scattered a few peas right and left.

She walked nearly the whole day, right into the midst of the forest, where it was almost dark. Here she saw a solitary house, which she did

not like: it was so dark and dismal. She went in but found nobody, and there was dead silence. Suddenly a voice cried:

*"Turn back, turn back, thou bonnie bride,
Nor in this house of death abide."*

The maiden looked up and saw that the voice came from a bird in a cage hanging on the wall. Once more it made the same cry:

*"Turn back, turn back, thou bonnie bride,
Nor in this house of death abide."*

The beautiful bride went from room to room, all over the house, but they were all empty. Not a soul was to be seen. At last she reached the cellar and there she found an old, old woman with a shaking head.

"Can you tell me if my bridegroom lives here?"

"Alas, poor child!" answered the old woman. "Little dost thou know where thou art. Thou art in a murderers' den. Thou thoughtest thou wast about to be married, but death will be thy marriage. See here, I have had to fill this kettle with water, and when they have thee in their power they will kill thee without mercy, and cook and eat thee, for they are eaters of human flesh. Unless I take pity on thee and save thee, thou art lost." Then the old woman led her behind a great cask where she could not be seen. "Be as quiet as a mouse," she said. "Don't stir, or all will be lost. Tonight when the murderers are asleep, we will flee. I have long waited for an opportunity."

Hardly had she said this when the riotous crew came home. They dragged another maiden with them, but as they were quite drunk they paid no attention to her shrieks and lamentations. They gave her wine to drink, three glasses full—red, white, and yellow. After she had drunk them she fell down dead. The poor bride hidden behind the cask was terrified. She trembled and shivered, for she saw plainly to what fate she was destined.

One of the men noticed a gold ring on the little finger of the murdered girl. And as he could not pull it off he took an ax and chopped the finger off, but it sprang into the air and fell into the lap of the bride behind the cask. The man took a light to look for it, but he could not find it. One of the others said, "Have you looked behind the big cask?"

But the old woman called out, "Come and eat, and leave the search till tomorrow. The finger won't run away."

The murderer said, "The old woman is right," and they gave up the search and sat down to supper. But the old woman dropped a sleeping draught into their wine, so they soon lay down, went to sleep, and snored lustily.

When the bride heard them snoring she came out from behind the

cask, but she was obliged to step over the sleepers as they lay in rows upon the floor. She was dreadfully afraid of touching them, but God helped her and she got through without mishap. The old woman went with her and opened the door, and they hurried away as quickly as they could from this vile den.

All the asues had been blown away by the wind, but the peas and lentils had taken root and shot up, and showed them the way in the moonlight.

They walked the whole night and reached the mill in the morning. The maiden told her father all that she had been through.

When the day which had been fixed for the wedding came, the bridegroom appeared and the miller invited all his friends and relations. As they sat at table, each one was asked to tell some story. The bride was very silent, but when it came to her turn the bridegroom said, "Come, my love, have you nothing to say? Pray tell us something."

"I will tell you a dream I have had," she answered. "I was walking alone in a wood and I came to a solitary house where not a soul was to be seen. A cage was hanging on the wall of one of the rooms, and in it was a bird which cried:

*'Turn back, turn back, thou bonnie bride,
Nor in this house of death abide.'*

"It repeated the same words twice. This was only a dream, my love! I walked through all the rooms but they were all empty and dismal. At last I went down to the cellar, and there sat a very old woman, with a shaking head.

"I asked her, 'Does my bridegroom live here?' She answered, 'Alas, you poor child, you are in a murderers' den! Your bridegroom indeed lives here, but he will cut you to pieces, cook you, and eat you.' This was only a dream, my love!

"Then the old woman hid me behind a cask, but hardly had she done so when the murderers came home, dragging a maiden with them. They gave her three kinds of wine to drink—red, white, and yellow—and after drinking them she fell down dead. My love, I was only dreaming this! Then they took her things off and cut her to pieces. My love, I was only dreaming! One of the murderers saw a gold ring on the girl's little finger, and, as he could not pull it off, he chopped off the finger. But the finger bounded into the air and fell behind the cask upon my lap. Here is the finger with the ring!"

At these words she produced the finger and showed it to the company.

When the bridegroom heard these words, he turned as pale as ashes and tried to escape. But the guests seized him and handed him over to justice. And he and all his band were executed for their crimes.

THE SEVEN RAVENS

THERE WAS once a man who had seven sons, but never a daughter, however much he wished for one. At last, however, his wife gave him a daughter. His joy was great, but the child was small and delicate, and on account of its weakness it was to be christened at home.

The father sent one of his sons in haste to the spring to fetch some water. The other six ran with him, and because each of them wanted to be the first to draw the water the pitcher fell into the brook. There they stood and didn't know what to do, and not one of them ventured to go home.

As they did not come back, their father became impatient and said, "Perhaps the young rascals are playing about and have forgotten it altogether."

He became anxious lest his little girl should die unbaptized, and in hot vexation he cried, "I wish those youngsters would all turn into ravens!"

Scarcely were the words uttered when he heard a whirring in the air above his head. And looking upwards, he saw seven coal-black ravens flying away.

The parents could not undo the spell and were very sad about the loss of their seven sons, but they consoled themselves in some measure with their dear little daughter, who soon became strong, and every day more beautiful. For a long time she was unaware that she had had any brothers, for her parents took care not to mention them to her.

One day, however, by chance she heard some people saying about her, "Oh yes, the girl's pretty enough, but you know she is really to blame for the misfortune to her seven brothers."

Then she became very sad and went to her father and mother and asked if she had ever had any brothers, and what had become of them. The parents could no longer conceal the secret. They said, however, that what had happened was by the decree of heaven, and that her birth was merely the innocent occasion.

But the little girl could not get the matter off her conscience for a single day, and thought that she was bound to release her brothers again. She had no peace or quiet until she had secretly gone forth into the wide world to trace her brothers, wherever they might be, and to free them, let it cost what it might.

She took nothing with her but a little ring as a remembrance of her parents, a loaf of bread against hunger, a pitcher of water against thirst,

and a little chair in case of fatigue. She kept going on and on until she came to the end of the world.

Then she came to the sun, but it was hot and terrible, and it devoured little children. She ran hastily away to the moon, but it was too cold, and moreover dismal and dreary. And when the child was looking at it, it said, "I smell, I smell man's flesh!"

Then she quickly made off and came to the stars, and they were kind and good, and everyone sat on his own special seat.

But the morning star stood up and gave her a little bone, and said, "Unless you have this bone, you cannot open the Glass Mountain. And in the Glass Mountain are your brothers."

The girl took the bone and wrapped it up carefully in a little kerchief, and went on again until she came to the Glass Mountain. The gate was closed and she meant to get out the little bone. But when she undid the kerchief it was empty, and she had lost the good star's present.

How, now, was she to set to work? She was determined to rescue her brothers, but she had no key to open the Glass Mountain. The good little sister took a knife and cut off her own tiny finger, fitted it into the keyhole, and succeeded in opening the lock.

When she had entered, she met a dwarf who said, "My child, what are you looking for?"

"I am looking for my brothers, the seven ravens," she answered.

The dwarf said, "My masters, the ravens, are not at home, but if you care to wait until they come, please walk in."

Thereupon the dwarf brought in the ravens' supper. It was on seven little plates and in seven little cups, and the little sister ate a crumb or two from each of the little plates, and took a sip from each of the little cups, but she let the ring she had brought with her fall into the last little cup.

All at once a whirring and a crying were heard in the air, and then the dwarf said, "Now my masters the ravens are coming home."

Then they came in and wanted to eat and drink, and began to look about for their little plates and cups.

But they said one after another: "Hallo! who has been eating off my plate? Who has been drinking out of my cup? There has been some human mouth here."

And when the seventh drank to the bottom of his cup, the ring rolled up against his mouth.

He looked at it and recognized it as a ring belonging to his father and mother, and he said, "God grant that our sister may be here, and that we may be delivered."

As the maiden was standing behind the door listening, she heard the

wish and came forward, and then all the ravens got back their human form again.

And they embraced and kissed one another and went joyfully home.

TOM THUMB

A POOR PEASANT sat one evening by his hearth and poked the fire, while his wife sat opposite spinning. He said, "What a sad thing it is that we have no children. Our home is so quiet, while other folk's houses are noisy and cheerful."

"Yes," answered his wife, and she sighed. "Even if it were an only one, and if it were no bigger than my thumb, I should be quite content. We would love it with all our hearts."

Now some time after this she had a little boy who was strong and healthy, but was no bigger than a thumb. Then they said, "Well, our wish is fulfilled, and small as he is we will love him dearly." And because of his tiny stature they called him Tom Thumb.

They let him want for nothing, yet still the child grew no bigger, but remained the same size as when he was born. Still he looked out on the world with intelligent eyes, and soon showed himself a clever and agile creature who was lucky in all he attempted.

One day when the peasant was preparing to go into the forest to cut wood, he said to himself, "I wish I had someone to bring the cart after me."

"Oh father," said Tom Thumb, "I will soon bring it. You leave it to me. It shall be there at the appointed time."

Then the peasant laughed and said, "How can that be? You are much too small even to hold the reins."

"That doesn't matter, if only mother will harness the horse," answered Tom. "I will sit in his ear and tell him where to go."

"Very well," said the father. "We will try it for once."

When the time came, the mother harnessed the horse, set Tom in his ear, and then the little creature called out "Gee up!" and "Whoa!" in turn, and directed it where to go. It went quite well, just as though it were being driven by its master, and they went the right way to the wood. Now it happened that while the cart was turning a corner, and Tom was calling to the horse, two strange men appeared on the scene.

"My goodness!" said one. "What is this? There goes a cart, and a driver is calling to the horse, but there is nothing to be seen."

"There is something queer about this," said the other. "We will follow the cart and see where it stops."

The cart went on deep into the forest and arrived quite safely at the place where the wood was cut.

When Tom spied his father, he said, "You see, father, here I am with the cart. Now lift me down." The father held the horse with his left hand, and took his little son out of its ear with the right. Then Tom sat down quite happily on a straw. When the two strangers noticed him, they did not know what to say for astonishment.

Then one drew the other aside and said, "Listen, that little creature might make our fortune if we were to show him in the town for money. We will buy him."

So they went up to the peasant and said, "Sell us the little man. He shall be well looked after with us."

"No," said the peasant. "He is the delight of my eyes, and I will not sell him for all the gold in the world."

But Tom Thumb, when he heard the bargain, crept up by the folds of his father's coat, placed himself on his shoulder, and whispered in his ear, "Father, let me go. I will soon come back again."

Then his father gave him to the two men for a fine piece of gold.

"Where will you sit?" they asked him.

"Oh, just put me on the brim of your hat. Then I can walk up and down and observe the neighborhood without falling down."

They did as he wished, and when Tom had said good-by to his father, they went away with him.

They walked on till it was twilight, when the little man said, "You must lift me down."

"Stay where you are," answered the man on whose head he sat.

"No," said Tom, "I will come down. Lift me down immediately."

The man took off his hat and set the little creature in a field by the wayside. He jumped and crept about for a time, here and there among the sods, then slipped suddenly into a mousehole which he had discovered.

"Good evening, gentlemen. Just go on home without me," he called out to them in mockery.

They ran about and poked with sticks into the mousehole, but all in vain. Tom crept further and further back, and as it soon got quite dark, they were forced to go home, full of anger and with empty purses.

When Tom noticed that they were gone, he crept out of his underground hiding place again. "It is dangerous walking in this field in the dark," he said. "One might easily break one's leg or one's neck." Luckily he came to an empty snail shell. "Thank goodness," he said, "I can pass the night in safety here." And he sat down.

Not long after, just when he was about to go to sleep, he heard two men pass by. One said, "How shall we set about stealing the rich parson's gold and silver?"

"I can tell you," interrupted Tom.

"What was that?" said one robber in a fright. "I heard someone speak."

They remained standing and listened.

Then Tom spoke again, "Take me with you and I will help you."

"Where are you?" they asked.

"Just look on the ground and see where the voice comes from," he answered.

At last the thieves found him and lifted him up. "You little urchin, are *you* going to help us?"

"Yes," he said. "I will creep between the iron bars into the pastor's room, and I will hand out to you what you want."

"All right," they said. "We will see what you can do."

When they came to the parsonage, Tom crept into the room but called out immediately with all his strength to the others, "Do you want everything that is here?"

The thieves were frightened and said, "Do speak softly and don't wake anyone."

But Tom pretended not to understand and called out again, "What do you want? Everything?"

The cook, who slept above, heard him and sat up in bed and listened. But the thieves were so frightened that they retreated a little way. At last they summoned up courage again, and thought to themselves, "The little rogue wants to tease us." So they came back and whispered to him, "Now do be serious and hand us out something."

Then Tom called out again as loud as he could, "I will give you everything if you will only hold out your hands."

The maid, who was listening intently, heard him quite distinctly, jumped out of bed, and stumbled to the door. The thieves turned and fled, running as though wild huntsmen were after them. But the maid, seeing nothing, went to get a light. When she came back with it, Tom, without being seen, slipped out into the barn. And the maid, after she had searched every corner and found nothing, went to bed again, thinking she had been dreaming with her eyes and ears open.

Tom Thumb climbed about in the hay and found a splendid place to sleep. There he determined to rest till day came, and then to go home to his parents. But he had other experiences to go through first. This world is full of trouble and sorrow!

The maid got up in the gray dawn to feed the cows. First she went into the barn, where she piled up an armful of hay, the very bundle in

which poor Tom was asleep. But he slept so soundly that he knew nothing till he was almost in the mouth of the cow, who was eating him along with the hay.

"Heavens!" he said. "However did I get into this mill?" But he soon saw where he was, and the great thing was to avoid being crushed between the cow's teeth. At last, whether he liked it or not, he had to go down the cow's throat. "They forgot to put windows in this house," he said. "The sun does not shine into it and no light has been provided."

Altogether he was very ill-pleased with his quarters, and worst of all, more and more hay came in at the door, and the space grew narrower and narrower. At last he called out in his fear, as loud as he could, "Don't give me any more food. Don't give me any more food."

The maid was just milking the cow, and when she heard the same voice as in the night, without seeing anyone, she was frightened, and slipped from her stool and spilt the milk. Then in the greatest haste she ran to her master and said, "Oh, your reverence, the cow has spoken!"

"You are mad," he answered, but he went into the stable himself to see what was happening.

Scarcely had he set foot in the cowshed before Tom began again, "Don't bring me any more food."

Then the pastor was terrified too, and thought that the cow must be bewitched. So he ordered it to be killed. It was accordingly slaughtered, but the stomach, in which Tom was hidden, was thrown into the manure heap. Tom had the greatest trouble in working his way out. Just as he stuck out his head, a hungry wolf ran by and snapped up the whole stomach with one bite. But still Tom did not lose courage.

"Perhaps the wolf will listen to reason," he said. So he called out, "Dear wolf, I know where you can find a fine meal."

"Where is it to be had?" asked the wolf.

"Why, in such and such a house," answered Tom. "You must squeeze through the grating of the storeroom window, and there you will find cakes, bacon, and sausages, as many as you can possibly eat." And he went on to describe his father's house.

The wolf did not wait to hear this twice, and at night forced himself in through the grating and ate to his heart's content. When he was satisfied, he wanted to go away again, but he had grown so fat that he could not get out the same way. Tom had reckoned on this, and began to make a great commotion inside the wolf's body, struggling and screaming with all his might.

"Be quiet!" said the wolf. "You will wake up the people of the house."

"All very fine," answered Tom. "You have eaten your fill, and now I am going to make merry." And he began to scream again with all his might.

At last his father and mother woke up, ran to the room, and looked through the crack of the door. When they saw a wolf they went away, and the husband fetched his ax and the wife a scythe.

"You stay behind," said the man, as they came into the room. "If my blow does not kill him, you must attack him and rip up his body."

When Tom Thumb heard his father's voice, he called out, "Dear father, I am here, inside the wolf's body."

Full of joy, his father cried, "Heaven be praised! Our dear child is found again." And he bade his wife throw aside the scythe that it might not injure Tom.

Then he gathered himself together and struck the wolf a blow on the head, so that it fell down lifeless. Then with knives and shears they ripped up the body and took their little boy out.

"Ah," said his father, "what trouble we have been in about you."

"Yes, father, I have traveled about the world, and I am thankful to breathe fresh air again."

"Wherever have you been?" they asked.

"Down a mousehole, in a cow's stomach, and in a wolf's maw," he answered. "And now I shall stay with you."

"And we will never sell you again for all the riches in the world," they said, kissing and fondling their dear child.

Then they gave him food and drink and had new clothes made for him, as his own had been spoilt in his travels.

THE CLEVER GRETTEL

THERE WAS once a cook named Gretel who wore shoes with red knots, and when she went out with them on she used to turn about this way and that way, and then say to herself quite contentedly, "Ah, you are a very pretty girl!" And when she came home she drank a glass of wine for joy. And as the wine made her wish to eat, she used to taste of the best that she had and excuse herself by saying, "The cook ought to know how her cooking tastes."

One day it happened that her master said to her, "Gretel, this evening a guest is coming. So cook me two fowls very nicely."

"I will do it directly, master," replied Gretel. She soon killed the fowls, plucked, dressed, and spitted them, and as evening came on she

put them before the fire to roast. They began to turn brown and to cook through, but still the guest had not come. Then Gretel said to the master, "If your guest does not come soon I shall have to take the fowls from the fire, but it will be a great shame not to eat them soon, while they are very juicy."

The master said, "I will run out myself and bring the guest home." And as soon as he had turned his back, Gretel took the spit with its two fowls off the fire, and thought to herself, "Ah, I have stood so long before the fire that I am quite hot and thirsty. Who knows when he will come? Meanwhile I will run down into the cellar and have a draught."

Gretel ran down the stairs and set down a jug, and saying, "God bless you, Gretel!" she took a good pull at the beer. And when that was down she had another draught.

Then she went up again and placed the fowls before the fire, and turned the spit around quite merrily, first spreading some butter over their skins.

But the roasting fowls smelled so good that Gretel thought, "They had better be roasted now." And so she dipped her finger into the gravy and said, "Ah, how good these fowls are! It is a sin and shame that they should not be eaten at once."

She ran to the window, therefore, to see if her master was yet coming with his guest, but there was nobody, and she turned again to the fowls. "Ah, one wing is burnt!" said she, "I had better eat that." And cutting it off, she ate it. But then she thought, "I had better take the other, too, or master will see that something is wanting."

When she had finished the two wings, she went again to see whether her master was coming, but without success. "Who knows," said she, "whether they will come or not? Perhaps they have stopped along the way. Well, Gretel, be of good courage. The one fowl is begun. Have another drink and then eat it up completely, for when it is eaten you will be at rest. And besides, why should good things be allowed to spoil?"

So thinking, Gretel ran once more into the cellar, took a hearty drink, and then ate up one fowl with great pleasure. As soon as it was down, and the master still had not returned, Gretel looked at the other fowl and said, "Where the one is, the other ought to be also. The two belong with one another. What is right for the one is right for the other. I believe that another draught would not harm me." So saying, she took another hearty drink, and let the second fowl slip down after the other.

Just as she was enjoying the eating, the master came running up and called, "Make haste, Gretel! the guest is coming directly."

"Yes, master," said she. "It will soon be ready."

The master went in to see if the table were properly laid and, taking up the great knife wherewith he was to carve the fowls, he began to sharpen it on the stones. Meantime the guest came and knocked politely at the door.

Gretel ran to see who it was, and when she perceived the guest she held her finger to her mouth to enjoin silence and said, "Hasten quickly away! If my master discovers you here you are lost. He certainly did invite you here to supper, but he has it in his mind to cut off your ears. Just listen how he is sharpening his knife!"

The guest listened to the sound and then hurried down the steps as fast as he could, while Gretel ran screaming to her master and said to him, "You have invited a fine guest!"

"What?" said he. "What do you mean?"

"Why," replied Gretel, "just as I was about to serve them up, your guest took the two fowls off the dish and bolted away with them."

"That is fine manners, certainly!" said the master, grieved for his fine fowls. "He might have left me one of them at least, so that I might have had something to eat." Then he called after his guest to stop, who pretended not to hear him. Then he ran after him, knife in hand, calling out, "Only one! Only one!" meaning that his guest should leave one fowl behind him and not take both. But the latter supposed that his host meant that he would cut off only one ear, and so he ran on as if fire were at his heels, so that he might take both ears home with him.

HANSEL AND GRETEL

CLOSE to a large forest there lived a woodcutter with his wife and his two children. The boy was called Hansel and the girl Gretel. They were always very poor and had very little to live on. And at one time when there was famine in the land, he could no longer procure daily bread.

One night when he lay in bed worrying over his troubles, he sighed and said to his wife, "What is to become of us? How are we to feed our poor children when we have nothing for ourselves?"

"I'll tell you what, husband," answered the woman. "Tomorrow morning we will take the children out quite early into the thickest part of the forest. We will light a fire and give each of them a piece of bread. Then we will go to our work and leave them alone. They won't be able to find their way back, and so we shall be rid of them."

"Nay, wife," said the man, "we won't do that. I could never find it

in my heart to leave my children alone in the forest. Wild animals would soon tear them to pieces."

"What a fool you are!" she said. "Then we must all four die of hunger. You may as well plane the boards for our coffins at once."

She gave him no peace till he consented. "But I grieve over the poor children all the same," said the man.

The two children could not go to sleep for hunger either, and they heard what their stepmother said to their father.

Gretel wept bitterly and said, "All is over with us now."

"Be quiet, Gretel," said Hansel. "Don't cry! I will find some way out of it."

When the old people had gone to sleep, he got up, put on his little coat, opened the door, and slipped out. The moon was shining brightly and the white pebbles round the house shone like newly minted coins. Hansel stooped down and put as many into his pockets as they would hold.

Then he went back to Gretel and said, "Take comfort, little sister, and go to sleep. God won't forsake us." And then he went to bed again.

At daybreak, before the sun had risen, the woman came and said, "Get up, you lazybones! We are going into the forest to fetch wood."

Then she gave them each a piece of bread and said, "Here is something for your dinner, but don't eat it before then, for you'll get no more."

Gretel put the bread under her apron, for Hansel had the stones in his pockets. Then they all started for the forest. When they had gone a little way, Hansel stopped and looked back at the cottage, and he did the same thing again and again.

His father said, "Hansel, what are you stopping to look back at? Take care and put your best foot foremost."

"Oh, father," said Hansel, "I am looking at my white cat. It is sitting on the roof, wanting to say good-by to me."

"Little fool, that's no cat! It's the morning sun shining on the chimney," said the mother.

But Hansel had not been looking at the cat. He had dropped a pebble on the ground each time he stopped.

When they reached the middle of the forest, their father said, "Now children, pick up some wood. I want to make a fire to warm you."

Hansel and Gretel gathered the twigs together and soon made a huge pile. Then the pile was lighted, and when it blazed up the woman said, "Now lie down by the fire and rest yourselves while we go and cut wood. When we have finished we will come back to fetch you."

Hansel and Gretel sat by the fire, and when dinnertime came they each ate their little bit of bread, and they thought their father was quite

near because they could hear the sound of an ax. It was no ax, however, but a branch which the man had tied to a dead tree, and which blew backwards and forwards against it. They sat there so long a time that they got tired. Then their eyes began to close and they were soon fast asleep.

When they woke it was dark night. Gretel began to cry, "How shall we ever get out of the wood?"

But Hansel comforted her and said, "Wait a little while till the moon rises, and then we will find our way."

When the full moon rose, Hansel took his little sister's hand and they walked on, guided by the pebbles, which glittered like newly coined money. They walked the whole night, and at daybreak they found themselves back at their father's cottage.

They knocked at the door, and when the woman opened it and saw Hansel and Gretel she said, "You bad children, why did you sleep so long in the wood? We thought you did not mean to come back any more."

But their father was delighted, for it had gone to his heart to leave them behind alone.

Not long afterwards they were again in great destitution, and the children heard the woman at night in bed say to their father, "We have eaten up everything again but half a loaf, and then we will be at the end of everything. The children must go away! We will take them farther into the forest so that they won't be able to find their way back. There is nothing else to be done."

The man took it much to heart and said, "We had better share our last crust with the children."

But the woman would not listen to a word he said. She only scolded and reproached him. Anyone who once says A must also say B, and as the father had given in the first time he had to do so the second. The children were again wide awake and heard what was said.

When the old people went to sleep Hansel again got up, meaning to go out and get some more pebbles, but the woman had locked the door and he couldn't get out. But he consoled his little sister and said, "Don't cry, Gretel. Go to sleep. God will help us."

In the early morning the woman made the children get up and gave them each a piece of bread, but it was smaller than the last. On the way to the forest Hansel crumbled it up in his pocket, and stopped every now and then to throw a crumb onto the ground.

"Hansel, what are you stopping to look about you for?" asked his father.

"I am looking at my dove which is sitting on the roof and wants to say good-by to me," answered Hansel.

"Little fool," said the woman, "that is no dove! It is the morning sun shining on the chimney."

Nevertheless, Hansel strewed the crumbs from time to time on the ground. The woman led the children far into the forest, where they had never been before.

Again they made a big fire, and the woman said, "Stay where you are, children, and when you are tired you may go to sleep for a while. We are going further on to cut wood, and in the evening when we have finished we will come back and fetch you."

At dinnertime Gretel shared her bread with Hansel, for he had crumbled his upon the road. Then they went to sleep, and the evening passed but no one came to fetch the poor children.

It was quite dark when they woke up, and Hansel cheered his little sister. He said, "Wait a bit, Gretel, till the moon rises, and then we can see the bread crumbs which I scattered to show us the way home."

When the moon rose they started, but they found no bread crumbs, for all the thousands of birds in the forest had picked them up and eaten them.

Hansel said to Gretel, "We shall soon find the way." But they could not find it. They walked the whole night and all the next day from morning till night, but they could not get out of the wood.

They were very hungry, for they had nothing to eat but a few berries which they found. They were so tired that their legs would not carry them any farther, and they lay down under a tree and went to sleep.

When they woke in the morning, it was the third day since they had left their father's cottage. They started to walk again, but they only got deeper and deeper into the wood, and if no help came they must perish.

At midday they saw a beautiful snow-white bird sitting on a tree. It sang so beautifully that they stood still to listen to it. When it stopped, it fluttered its wings and flew around them. They followed it till they came to a little cottage, on the roof of which it settled down.

When they got quite near, they saw that the little house was made of bread and roofed with cake. The windows were transparent sugar.

"Here is something for us," said Hansel. "We will have a good meal. I will have a piece of the roof, Gretel, and you can have a bit of the window. It will be nice and sweet."

Hansel reached up and broke off a piece of the roof to see what it tasted like. Gretel went to the window and nibbled at that. A gentle voice called out from within:

*"Nibbling, nibbling like a mouse,
Who's nibbling at my little house?"*

The children answered:

*"The wind, the wind doth blow
From heaven to earth below."*

And they went on eating without disturbing themselves. Hansel, who found the roof very good, broke off a large piece for himself, and Gretel pushed a whole round pane out of the window and sat down on the ground to enjoy it.

All at once the door opened and an old, old woman, supporting herself on a crutch, came hobbling out. Hansel and Gretel were so frightened that they dropped what they held in their hands.

But the old woman only shook her head and said, "Ah, dear children, who brought you here? Come in and stay with me. You will come to no harm."

She took them by the hand and led them into the little house. A nice dinner was set before them: pancakes and sugar, milk, apples, and nuts. After this she showed them two little white beds into which they crept, and they felt as if they were in heaven.

Although the old woman appeared to be so friendly, she was really a wicked old witch who was on the watch for children, and she had built the bread house on purpose to lure them to her. Whenever she could get a child into her clutches she cooked it and ate it, and considered it a grand feast. Witches have red eyes and can't see very far, but they have keen noses like animals and can scent the approach of human beings.

When Hansel and Gretel came near her, she laughed wickedly to herself and said scornfully, "Now that I have them, they shan't escape me."

She got up early in the morning before the children were awake, and when she saw them sleeping, with their beautiful rosy cheeks, she murmured to herself, "They will be dainty morsels."

She seized Hansel with her bony hand and carried him off to a little stable, where she locked him up behind a barred door. He might shriek as loud as he liked, she took no notice of him.

Then she went to Gretel and shook her till she woke, and cried, "Get up, little lazybones! Fetch some water and cook something nice for your brother. He is in the stable and has to be fattened. When he is nice and fat, I will eat him."

Gretel began to cry bitterly, but it was no use; she had to obey the witch's orders. The best food was cooked for poor Hansel, but Gretel had only the shells of crayfish.

The old woman hobbled to the stable every morning and cried, "Hansel, put your finger out for me to feel how fat you are."

Hansel put out a knucklebone, and the old woman, whose eyes were too dim to see, thought it was his finger. And she was much astonished that he did not get fat.

When four weeks had passed and Hansel still kept thin, she became impatient and would wait no longer.

"Now then, Gretel," she cried, "bustle along and fetch the water. Fat or thin, I will kill Hansel and eat him."

Oh, how his poor little sister grieved! As she carried the water, the tears streamed down her cheeks. "Dear God, help us!" she cried. "If only the wild animals in the forest had eaten us, we should at least have died together."

"You may spare your lamentations! They will do you no good," said the old woman.

Early in the morning Gretel had to go out to fill the kettle with water, and then she had to kindle a fire and hang the kettle over it.

"We will bake first," said the old witch. "I have heated the oven and kneaded the dough."

She pushed poor Gretel towards the oven and said, "Creep in and see if it is properly heated, and then we will put the bread in."

She meant, when Gretel had gone in, to shut the door and roast her, but Gretel saw her intention and said, "I don't know how to get in. How am I to manage it?"

"Stupid goose!" cried the witch. "The opening is big enough. You can see that I could get into it myself."

She hobbled up and stuck her head into the oven. But Gretel gave her a push which sent the witch right in, and then she banged the door and bolted it.

"Oh! oh!" the witch began to howl horribly. But Gretel ran away and left the wicked witch to perish miserably.

Gretel ran as fast as she could to the stable. She opened the door and cried, "Hansel, we are saved! The old witch is dead."

Hansel sprang out, like a bird out of a cage when the door is set open. How delighted they were. They fell upon each other's necks and kissed each other and danced about for joy.

As they had nothing more to fear, they went into the witch's house, and in every corner they found chests full of pearls and precious stones.

"These are better than pebbles," said Hansel, as he filled his pockets.

Gretel said, "I must take something home with me too." And she filled her apron.

"But now we must go," said Hansel, "so that we may get out of this enchanted wood."

Before they had gone very far, they came to a great piece of water

"We can't get across it," said Hansel. "I see no stepping stones and no bridge."

"And there are no boats either," answered Gretel, "but there is a duck swimming. It will help us over if we ask it."

So she cried:

*"Little duck that cries quack, quack,
Here Gretel and here Hansel stand.
Quickly take us on your back,
No path nor bridge is there at hand!"*

The duck came swimming towards them, and Hansel got on its back and told his sister to sit on his knee.

"No," answered Gretel, "it will be too heavy for the duck. It must take us over one after the other."

The good creature did this, and when they had got safely over and walked for a while the wood seemed to grow more and more familiar to them, and at last they saw their father's cottage in the distance. They began to run, and rushed inside, where they threw their arms around their father's neck. The man had not had a single happy moment since he deserted his children in the wood, and in the meantime his wife had died.

Gretel shook her apron and scattered the pearls and precious stones all over the floor, and Hansel added handful after handful out of his pockets.

So all their troubles came to an end, and they lived together as happily as possible.

FREDERICK AND CATHERINE

THERE WAS once a man called Frederick who had a wife whose name was Catherine, and they had not long been married.

One day Frederick said, "Kate, I am now going to plow. When I come back I shall be hungry, so let me have something nice cooked, and a good draught of ale."

"Very well," said she. "It shall all be ready."

When dinnertime drew nigh, Catherine took a nice sausage, which was all the meat she had, and put it on the fire to fry. The sausage soon began to look brown and to crackle in the pan, and Catherine stood by with a fork and turned it.

Then she said to herself, "The sausage is almost ready. I may as well go to the cellar for the ale."

So she left the pan on the fire, took a large jug, and went into the cellar and tapped the ale cask. The beer ran into the jug and Catherine stood looking on.

At last it popped into her head, "The dog upstairs is not shut up. He may be running away with the sausage. It's lucky I thought of that."

So up she ran from the cellar, and sure enough the rascally cur had got the sausage in his mouth and was dragging it away on the ground.

Away ran Catherine and away ran the dog across the field. But he ran faster than she and would not let the sausage go.

"Ah well," said Catherine. "What can't be cured must be endured." So she turned round, and as she had run a good way and was tired, she walked home leisurely to cool herself.

Now all this time the ale was running too, for Catherine had not turned the cock. And when the jug was full the liquor ran upon the floor till the cask was empty. When she got to the cellar stairs she saw what had happened.

"Goodness gracious!" said she. "What shall I do to keep Frederick from finding out about this?"

So she thought for a while, and at last remembered that up in the loft there was a sack of fine flour bought at the last fair, and that if she sprinkled this over the floor it would dry up the ale nicely.

"What a lucky thing," said she, "that we kept that flour! We have now a good use for it. He who saves, has!"

So away she went up to the loft for it, but she managed to set it down on the great jug full of beer and upset it. And thus all the ale that had been saved was set swimming on the floor also.

"Ah well," said she, "when one thing goes, another may as well follow."

Then she strewed the flour all about the cellar, and was quite pleased with her cleverness and said, "How very neat and clean it looks!"

At noon Frederick came home.

"Now, wife," cried he, "what have you for dinner?"

"Oh Frederick!" answered she, "I was cooking you a sausage, but while I went down to draw the ale, the dog ran away with it. And while I ran after him the ale all ran out. And when I went to dry up the ale with the sack of flour that we got at the fair, I upset the jug. But the cellar is now quite dry, and looks so clean!"

"Kate, Kate," said he, "how could you do all this? Why did you leave the sausage to fry and the ale to run, and then spoil all the flour?"

"Why, Frederick," said she, "I did not know I was doing wrong. You should have told me before."

The husband thought to himself, "If my wife manages matters thus, I must look sharp myself." Now he had a good deal of gold in the

house, so he said to Catherine, "What pretty yellow buttons these are! I shall put them into a box and bury them in the garden, but take care that you never go near or meddle with them."

"No, Frederick," said she, "that I never will."

As soon as he was gone, there came by some peddlers with earthenware plates and dishes, and they asked her whether she would buy.

"Oh dear me, I should like to buy very much, but I have no money. If you had any use for yellow buttons, I might deal with you."

"Yellow buttons?" said they. "Let us have a look at them."

"Go into the garden and dig where I tell you, and you will find the yellow buttons. I dare not go myself."

So the rogues went, and when they found what these yellow buttons were, they took them all away, and left her plenty of plates and dishes. Then she set them all about the house for a show.

And when Frederick came back, he cried out, "Kate, what have you been doing?"

"Look," said she. "I have bought all these with your yellow buttons, but I did not touch them myself. The peddlers themselves went and dug them up."

"Wife! wife!" said Frederick. "What a pretty piece of work you have made. Those yellow buttons were all my money. How came you to do such a thing?"

"Why," answered she, "I did not know there was any harm in it. You should have told me."

Catherine stood musing for a while, and at last said to her husband, "Hark ye, Frederick, we will soon get the gold back. Let us run after the thieves."

"Well, we will try," answered he. "But take some butter and cheese with you that we may have something to eat by the way."

"Very well," said she, and they set out. And as Frederick walked the fastest, he left his wife some way behind.

"It does not matter," thought she. "When we turn back, I shall be so much nearer home than he."

Presently she came to the top of a hill, down the side of which there was a road so narrow that the cart wheels had chafed the trees on each side as they passed.

"Ah, see now," said she, "how they have bruised and wounded those poor trees. They will never get well."

So she took pity on them and greased them with her butter so that the wheels might not hurt them so much. While she was doing this kind office, one of her cheeses fell out of the basket and rolled down the hill.

Catherine looked but could not see where it had gone, so she said,

"Well, I suppose the other can run down the same way and find you. He has younger legs than I have."

Then she rolled the other cheese after it, and away it went, nobody knows where, down the hill. But she said she supposed that they knew the road and would follow her, and she could not stay there all day waiting for them.

At last she overtook Frederick, who asked her to give him something to eat. Then she gave him the dry bread.

"Where are the butter and cheese?" said he.

"Oh," answered she, "I used the butter to grease those poor trees that the wheels chafed so. And one of the cheeses ran away, so I sent the other after it to find it, and I suppose they are both on the road together somewhere."

"What a goose you are to do such silly things!" said the husband.

"How can you say so?" said she. "I am sure you never told me not to."

Then they ate the dry bread together, and Frederick said, "Kate, I hope you locked the door safe when you came away."

"No," she answered, "you did not tell me to."

"Then go home and do it now before we go any farther," said Frederick. "And bring with you something else to eat. I will wait here for you."

Catherine went, and thought to herself on the way, "Frederick wants something to eat, but I don't think he is very fond of butter and cheese. I'll bring him a bag of fine nuts to eat and a pitcher of vinegar to drink, for I have often seen him take some."

When she reached home, she bolted the back door, but the front door she took off the hinges and said, "Frederick told me to lock the door, but surely it can nowhere be so safe as if I take it with me."

So she took her time by the way, and when she overtook her husband she cried out, "Here, Frederick! Here is the door. Now you may watch it as carefully as you please."

"Alas! alas!" said he. "What a clever wife I have! I sent you to make the house fast, and you take the door away so that everybody may go in and out as they please. However, as you have brought the door, you shall carry it about with you for your pains."

"Very well," answered she, "I'll carry the door, but I'll not carry the nuts and vinegar pitcher also. That would be too much of a load. So I'll just fasten them to the door and it can carry them."

Frederick made no objection to that plan, and they set off into the wood to look for the thieves, but did not find them. And when it grew dark, they climbed up into a tree to spend the night there. Scarcely were they up than who should come by but the very rogues

they were looking for. They were indeed great rascals, and belonged to that class of people who find things before they are lost. They were tired, so they sat down and made a fire under the very tree where Frederick and Catherine were. Frederick slipped down on the other side, and picked up some stones. Then he climbed up again and tried to hit the thieves on the head with them.

But they only said, "It must be near morning, for the wind shakes the fir cones down."

Catherine, who had the door on her shoulder, began to be very tired, but she thought it was the nuts upon it that were so heavy.

So she said softly, "Frederick, I must let the nuts go."

"No," answered he, "not now. They will discover us."

"I can't help that. They must go."

"Well, then, throw them down if you must!"

Then away rattled the nuts down among the branches, and one of the thieves cried, "Bless me, it is hailing."

A little while afterwards Catherine thought the door was still very heavy, so she whispered to Frederick, "I must throw the vinegar down."

"Pray don't," answered he. "It will discover us."

"I can't help that," said she. "Go it must."

So she poured all the vinegar down, and the thieves said, "What a heavy dew there is!"

At last Catherine thought, "Can it be the door that is so heavy?" So she said, "Frederick, I must throw the door down."

But he begged and prayed her not to do so, for he was sure it would betray them.

"I am about to let it fall, Frederick," she said.

"Devil take it, then!" said he.

And it fell down with such a clatter upon the thieves that they cried out, "The devil is coming down from the tree!"

And not knowing what was coming, they ran away as fast as they could and left all the gold. So when Frederick and Catherine came down, there they found all their money again and carried it home.

SNOW-WHITE AND ROSE-RED

THERE WAS once a poor widow who lived alone in her hut with her two children, who were called Snow-White and Rose-Red, because they were like the flowers which bloomed on two rosebushes

which grew before the cottage. These two children were as good, happy, industrious, and amiable as any in the world, only Snow-White was more quiet and gentle than Rose-Red.

Rose-Red would run and jump about the meadows, seeking flowers and catching butterflies, while Snow-White sat at home helping her mother to keep house, or reading to her if there were nothing else to do.

The two children loved each other so dearly that they always walked hand in hand when they went out together, and when Snow-White said, "We will never separate from each other," Rose-Red replied, "Not so long as we live!" And their mother said, "What each girl has, she must share with the other."

Often they ran deep into the forest and gathered wild berries, but no beast ever harmed them. For the hare would eat cabbage leaves out of their hands, the fawn grazed by their side, the goats frisked about them in play, and the birds sat perched on the boughs singing as if nobody were near. No accident ever befell them, and if they stayed late in the forest and night came upon them, they used to lie down on the moss and sleep till morning. And because their mother knew they would do so, she felt no concern about them.

Once when they had passed the night in the forest and the dawn of morning awoke them, they saw a beautiful child dressed in shining white dress sitting near their couch. The child rose up and looked at them kindly, but without saying anything went into the forest. And when the children looked round they saw that they had slept close to the edge of a pit, into which they would have certainly fallen had they walked a couple of steps farther in the dark. Their mother told them the figure they had seen was doubtless the good angel who watches over children.

Snow-White and Rose-Red kept their mother's cottage so clean that it was a pleasure to look in it. Every morning in the summertime Rose-Red would put the house in order, and then lay a wreath of flowers at her mother's bed before she woke up, in which she always placed a bud from each rose tree. Every winter in the morning Snow-White would light the fire and put the kettle on to boil, and although the kettle was made of copper it shone like gold, because it was polished so well.

In the evening when the flakes of snow were falling, the mother would say, "Go, Snow-White, and bolt the door." And then they would sit down at the hearth, and the mother would put on her spectacles and read out of a great book, while the two girls sat spinning. By their side lay a little lamb, and on a perch behind them a white dove sat with its head under a wing.

One evening when they were sitting comfortably together, there came a knock at the door, as if someone wished to come in.

"Make haste, Rose-Red," cried her mother. "Make haste and open the door. Perhaps there is some traveler outside who needs shelter."

So Rose-Red went and drew the bolt and opened the door, thinking it was some poor man outside. But instead a great bear poked his head in. Rose-Red cried out and ran back, the little lamb bleated, the dove fluttered on her perch, and Snow-White hid herself behind her mother's bed.

The bear, however, began to speak and said, "Do not be afraid. I will do you no harm. I am half-frozen and only wish to come in and warm myself."

"Poor bear!" cried the mother. "Come in and lie down by the fire, but take care you do not burn your coat." Then she continued, "Come here, Rose-Red and Snow-White. The bear will not harm you. He means well."

So they both came back, and at last the lamb and the dove came near and were no longer afraid of him.

"Come here, children," said the bear, as he entered. "Come and knock the snow off my coat."

So they brought the broom and swept him clean. Then he stretched himself before the fire and growled cheerfully and comfortably, and in a little while the children became friendly enough to play tricks with their unwieldy guest. They tugged at his long shaggy hair, put their feet against his back and rolled him about, and even ventured to hit him with a hazel stick, laughing when he grumbled. The bear bore all their play in good temper, and only when they hit too hard he cried out:

*"Leave me my life, you children,
Snow-White and Rose-Red,
Or you'll never wed."*

When bedtime came and the others had gone to bed, the mother said to the bear, "You may sleep here by the hearth if you like, and then you will be safe from the cold and the bad weather."

As soon as day came the two children let the bear out again, and he trotted away over the snow, and every evening afterwards he came back at a certain hour. He would lie down on the hearth and allow the children to play with him as much as they liked. And at last they became so used to him that the door was left unbolted till their black friend had arrived.

But as soon as spring returned and everything out of doors was green again, the bear said to Snow-White one morning, "Now I must leave, and I cannot return during the whole summer."

"Where are you going, then, dear bear?" asked Snow-White.

"I must go into the forest and guard my treasures from the evil

dwarfs. In winter, when the ground is hard, they are obliged to keep in their holes and cannot break through. But now, since the sun has thawed the earth and warmed it, the dwarfs break through and steal all they can find. And what has once passed into their hands and is hidden by them in their caves is not easily brought to light."

Snow-White, however, was very sad at the departure of the bear, and opened the door so slowly that when he hurried through it he left behind on the latch a piece of his hairy coat. And through the hole which was made in his coat Snow-White thought she saw the glittering of gold, but she was not certain about it. The bear, however, ran hastily away and was soon hidden behind the trees.

Soon afterwards the mother sent the children into the wood to gather sticks. While doing so they came to a tree lying across the path, and near its trunk something was bobbing up and down in the grass, and they could not imagine what it was. When they came nearer they saw a dwarf, with an old wrinkled face and a snow-white beard a yard long. The end of this beard was caught in a split of the tree, and the little man kept jumping about like a dog tied by a chain, for he did not know how to free himself.

He glared at the maidens with his fiery red eyes and cried, "Why do you stand there? Are you going to pass by without offering me any help?"

"What have you done, little man?" asked Rose-Red.

"You foolish goose!" cried the dwarf. "I was going to split the tree, in order to get a little wood for my kitchen. The little food which we get is soon burnt up with great logs. We don't swallow down so much as you greedy people devour! I had just driven the wedge in properly and everything was going well, but the wretched wedge was too smooth and flew out! And the tree closed up so suddenly that I could not draw out my beautiful white beard. So here it sticks, and I cannot get away. Don't laugh there, you silly milk-faced creatures! Ugh! How horrid you are!"

The children tried as hard as they could to pull the dwarf's beard out, but it was caught too tightly. "I will run and get some help," cried Rose-Red at length.

"Oh you crackbrained sheep's head!" snarled the dwarf. "What are you going to call other people for? You are two too many for me now. Can't you think of anything better?"

"Don't be impatient," replied Snow-White. "I have thought of something." And pulling her scissors out of her pocket, she cut off the end of the beard.

As soon as the dwarf found himself at liberty, he snatched up his sack, which lay filled with gold between the roots of the tree, and

throwing it over his shoulder he marched off, grumbling to himself, "Stupid people! To cut off a piece of my beautiful beard! Bad luck to you!" Away he went, without once even looking at the children.

Some time afterwards Snow-White and Rose-Red went to catch some fish, and as they came near the pond they saw something like a great grasshopper hopping about on the bank, as if it were going to jump into the water. They ran up and recognized the dwarf.

"What are you doing?" asked Rose-Red. "You will fall into the water."

"I am not quite such a simpleton as that," replied the dwarf. "But don't you see this fish trying to pull me in?"

The little man had been sitting there fishing and unfortunately the wind had entangled his beard with the fishing line. And so when a great fish bit the bait, the weak little fellow was not able to draw it out, and the fish had the upper hand. The dwarf held onto the reeds and rushes which grew near, but to no purpose, for the fish pulled him where it liked and he would soon have been drawn into the pond. Luckily just then the two maidens arrived and tried to release the beard of the dwarf from the fishing line, but they were too closely entangled. So the maiden pulled out her scissors again and cut off another piece of beard.

When the dwarf saw this done he cried out in a great rage. "You donkey! Do you want to disfigure my face? Was it not enough to cut off the end of my beard? Now you have to take away the best part of my fine beard! I dare not show myself again now to my own people. I wish you had run the soles off your boots before you had come here!"

So saying, he took up a bag of pearls which lay among the rushes, and without speaking another word slipped off and disappeared behind a stone.

Not many days after this adventure, it chanced that the mother sent the two maidens to the next town to buy thread, needles and pins, laces and ribbons. Their road led across a field where great pieces of rock lay strewn about. Just over their heads they saw a great bird flying round and round. Every now and then it dropped lower and lower, till at last it flew down behind a rock.

Then they heard a piercing shriek, and running up they saw with fright that the eagle had caught their old acquaintance the dwarf and was trying to carry him off. The gentle children at once laid tight hold of the little man and held him fast till the bird gave up the struggle and flew off.

As soon, then, as the dwarf had recovered from his fright, he cried out in his shrill voice, "Could you not have held me more gently?"

You pulled at my fine brown coat so hard that it is all torn and full of holes. What meddling rubbish you are!"

With these words he shouldered a bag filled with precious stones and slipped away to his cave among the rocks.

The maidens were by now used to his ingratitude, and so they walked on to the town and completed their errand. On the way home they crossed the same field and again came suddenly upon the dwarf, who had emptied his bag of precious stones in a clean place, thinking that nobody was near. The sun shone on the bright stones, which glittered with so many colors that the two maidens stood still to admire them.

"What are you standing there gaping for?" asked the dwarf, and his face grew as red as copper with rage. He continued to abuse the poor maidens till a loud growling noise was heard, and a great black bear came lumbering out of the forest. The dwarf jumped up terrified, but he could not reach his cave before the bear overtook him.

Then, terror-stricken, he cried out, "Spare me, my dear Lord Bear! I will give you all my treasures. See these beautiful precious stones which lie here. Only give me my life. What have you to fear from a little weak fellow like me? You would not even feel me with your big teeth. Here, take the two wicked girls! They will make nice morsels for you! They're as fat as young quails! For heaven's sake, eat them!"

The bear, however, did not take the trouble to speak, but gave the wicked dwarf a single blow with his paw, and he did not move again.

The maidens were then going to run away but the bear called after them, "Snow-White and Rose-Red, fear not! Wait and I will go with you."

They recognized his voice and stopped, and when the bear came up to them his rough coat suddenly fell off, and there stood a tall man, dressed entirely in gold.

"I am a king's son," he said, "and was condemned by the wicked dwarf, who stole all my treasures, to wander about in this forest in the form of a bear till his death freed me. Now he has got his well-deserved punishment."

Then they went home, and Snow-White was married to the Prince, and Rose-Red to his brother, with whom they shared the immense treasure which the dwarf had collected. The old mother also lived happily many years with her two children. And the rose trees which had stood before the cottage were now planted before the palace, and every year they bore beautiful red and white roses.

THE TWELVE HUNSMEN

THERE WAS once a prince who was betrothed to a maiden, the daughter of a king, whom he loved very much. One day when they were together and very happy, a messenger came from the Prince's father, who was lying ill, to summon him home to see him before he died.

He said to his beloved, "I must go away and leave you now, but I give you this ring as a keepsake. When I am King, I will come and fetch you away."

Then he rode off, and when he got home he found his father on his deathbed. His father said, "My dear son, I wanted to see you once more before I die. Promise to marry the bride I have chosen for you." And he named a certain princess. His son was so sad that without reflecting he promised to do what his father wished, and thereupon the King closed his eyes and died.

Now when the Prince had been proclaimed king, and the period of mourning was past, the time came when he had to keep his promise to his father. He made his offer to the Princess and it was accepted. His betrothed heard of this and grieved so much over his faithlessness that she very nearly died. The King, her father, asked, "Dear child, why are you so sad? You shall have whatever you desire."

She thought a moment and said, "Dear father, I want eleven maidens exactly like me in face, figure, and height."

The King said, "If it is possible, your wish shall be fulfilled."

Then, he caused a search to be made all over his kingdom till the eleven maidens were found, all exactly like his daughter. The Princess ordered twelve huntsmen's dresses to be made, which she commanded the maidens to wear, putting on the twelfth herself. Then she took leave of her father and rode away with the maidens to the court of her former bridegroom whom she loved so dearly. She asked him if he wanted any huntsmen, and whether he would take them all into his service. The King did not recognize her, but as they were all so handsome he said, yes, he would engage them. So they all entered the King's service.

Now the King had a lion which was a wonderful creature, for he knew all secret and hidden things. He said to the King one evening, "You fancy you have twelve huntsmen here, don't you?"

"Yes," said the King.

"You are mistaken," said the lion. "They are twelve maidens."

The King answered, "That can't be true! How can you prove it?"

"Oh, have some peas strewn in your anteroom tomorrow, and you will soon see. Men have a firm tread, and when they walk on peas, the peas don't move. But maidens trip and trot and slide, and make the peas roll about."

The King was pleased with the lion's advice and ordered the peas to be strewn on the floor.

There was, however, a servant of the King who favored the huntsmen, and when he heard that they were to be put to this test he went and told them all about it. He said, "The lion is going to prove to the King that you are maidens."

The Princess thanked him and said afterwards to her maidens, "Do your utmost to tread firmly on the peas."

Next morning when the King ordered them to be called, they walked into the antechamber with so firm a tread that not a pea moved. When they had gone away, the King said to the lion, "You lied. They walked just like men."

But the lion answered, "They had been warned of the test and were prepared for it. Just let twelve spinning wheels be brought into the antechamber, and they will be delighted at the sight as no man would be."

This plan also pleased the King and he ordered the spinning wheels. But again the kind servant warned the huntsmen of the plan. When they were alone, the Princess said to her maidens, "Control yourselves and don't so much as look at the spinning wheels."

When the King next morning sent for the huntsmen, they walked through the antechamber without even glancing at the spinning wheels.

Then the King said to the lion, "You lied to me. They *are* men. They never looked at the spinning wheels."

The lion answered, "They knew that they were on trial and restrained themselves."

But the King would not believe him any more.

The twelve huntsmen always went with the King on his hunting expeditions, and the longer he had them, the better he liked them. Now it happened one day when they were out hunting that the news came of the royal bride's approach.

When the true bride heard it, the shock was so great that her heart nearly stopped, and she fell down in a dead faint. The King, thinking something had happened to his favorite huntsman, ran to help him and pulled off his glove. Then he saw the ring which he had given to his first betrothed, and when he looked her in the face he recognized her. He was so moved that he kissed her, and when she opened her eyes he said, "Thou art mine and I am thine, and nobody in the world shall separate us."

Then he sent a messenger to the other bride and begged her to go home, as he already had a wife, and he who has an old dish does not need a new one. The marriage was then celebrated, and the lion was taken into favor again, because, after all, he had spoken the truth.

FAITHFUL JOHN

THERE WAS once an old king who, having fallen sick, thought to himself, "This is very likely my deathbed on which I am lying."

Then he said, "Let Faithful John be sent for."

Faithful John was his best-beloved servant, and was so called because he had served the King faithfully all his life long.

When he came near the bed, the King said to him, "Faithful John, I feel my end drawing near, and my only care is for my son. He is yet of tender years and does not always know how to shape his conduct. And unless you promise me to instruct him in all his actions and be a true foster father to him, I shall not be able to close my eyes in peace."

Then answered Faithful John, "I will never forsake him, and I will serve him faithfully even though it should cost me my life."

And the old King said, "Then I die, being of good cheer and at peace." And he went on to say, "After my death, you must lead him through the whole castle, into all the chambers, halls, and vaults, and show him the treasures that in them lie. But the last chamber in the long gallery, in which lies hidden the picture of the Princess of the Golden Palace, you must not show him. If he were to see that picture, he would directly fall into so great a love for her that he would faint with the strength of it. And afterwards for her sake he would run into great dangers. So you must guard him well."

And as Faithful John gave him his hand upon it, the old King became still and silent, laid his head upon the pillow, and died.

When the old King was laid in the grave, Faithful John told the young King what he had promised to his father on his deathbed, and said, "And I will certainly hold to my promise and be faithful to you, as I was faithful to him, even though it should cost me my life."

When the days of mourning were at an end, Faithful John said to the Prince, "It is now time that you should see your inheritance. I will show you all the paternal castle."

Then he led him over all the place, upstairs and downstairs, and showed him all the treasures and the splendid chambers. One chamber

only he did not open, that in which the perilous picture hung. Now the picture was so placed that when the door opened it was the first thing to be seen, and it was so wonderfully painted that it seemed to breathe and move. In the whole world there was nothing more lovely or more beautiful.

The young King noticed how Faithful John always passed by this one door and asked, "Why do you not undo this door?"

"There is something inside that would terrify you," answered he.

But the King answered, "I have seen the whole castle, and I will know what is in here also." And he went forward and tried to open the door by force.

Then Faithful John called him back and said, "I promised your father on his deathbed that you should not see what is in that room. It might bring great misfortune on you and me were I to break my promise."

But the young King answered, "I shall be undone if I do not go inside that room. I shall have no peace day or night until I have seen it with my own eyes, and I will not move from this place until you have unlocked it."

Then Faithful John saw there was no help for it, and he chose out the key from the big bunch with a heavy heart and many sighs. When the door was opened he walked in first. He thought that by standing in front of the King he might hide the picture from him. But that was no good: the King stood on tiptoe and looked over his shoulder. And when he saw the image of the lady that was so wonderfully beautiful and so glittering with gold and jewels, he fell on the ground powerless.

Faithful John helped him up, took him to his bed, and thought with sorrow, "Ah me! The evil has come to pass. What will become of us?"

Then he strengthened the King with wine until he came to himself. The first words that he said were, "Oh, the beautiful picture! Whose portrait is it?"

"It is the portrait of the Princess of the Golden Palace," answered Faithful John.

Then the King said, "My love for her is so great that if all the leaves of the forest were tongues they could not utter it. I stake my life on the chance of obtaining her. And you, my Faithful John, must stand by me."

The faithful servant considered for a long time how the business should be begun. It seemed to him that it would be difficult even to obtain only a sight of the Princess.

At last he thought out a way and said to the King, "All that she has about her is of gold—tables, chairs, dishes, drinking cups, bowls, and all the household furniture. In your treasury are five tons of gold. Let

the goldsmiths of your kingdom work it up into all kinds of vessels and implements, into all kinds of birds and wild creatures and wonderful beasts, such as may please her. Then we will carry them off with us and go and seek our fortune."

The King had all the goldsmiths fetched, and they worked day and night until at last some splendid things were prepared. When a ship had been loaded with them, Faithful John put on the garb of a merchant and so did the King, so as the more completely to disguise themselves. Then they journeyed over the sea, and went so far that at last they came to the city where the Princess of the Golden Palace dwelt.

Faithful John told the King to stay in the ship and to wait for him.

"Perhaps," said he, "I shall bring the Princess back with me, so take care that everything is in order. Let the golden vessels be placed about and the whole ship be adorned."

Then he gathered together in his apron some of the gold things, one of each kind, landed, and went up to the royal castle. And when he reached the courtyard of the castle, there stood by the well a pretty maiden who had two golden pails in her hand, and she was drawing water with them. And as she turned round to carry them away, she saw the strange man and asked him who he was.

He answered, "I am a merchant." And he opened his apron and let her look within it.

"Ah, what beautiful things!" cried she. And setting down her pails, she turned the golden toys over and looked at them one after another.

Then she said, "The Princess must see these. She takes so much pleasure in gold things that she will buy them all from you."

Then she took him by the hand and led him in, for she was the chambermaid.

When the Princess saw the golden wares she was very pleased and said, "All these are so finely worked that I should like to buy them of you."

But the Faithful John said, "I am only the servant of a rich merchant, and what I have here is nothing to what my master has in the ship. He has the cunningest and costliest things that ever were made of gold."

The Princess then wanted it all to be brought to her but he said, "That would take up many days. So great is the number of them and so much space would they occupy that there would not be enough room for them in your house."

But the Princess' curiosity and fancy grew so much that at last she

said, "Lead me to the ship. I will myself go and see your master's treasures."

Then Faithful John led her to the ship joyfully, and the King, when he saw that her beauty was even greater than the picture had set forth, felt his heart leap at the sight. Then she climbed up into the ship and the King received her.

Faithful John stayed by the steersman and gave orders for the ship to push off, saying, "Spread all sail, that she may fly like a bird in the air."

So the King showed her all the golden things, each separately—the dishes, the bowls, the birds, the wild creatures, and the wonderful beasts. Many hours were passed in looking at them all, and in her pleasure the Princess never noticed that the ship was moving onwards. When she had examined the last, she thanked the merchant and prepared to return home. But when she came to the ship's side, she saw that they were on the high seas, far from land and speeding on under full sail.

"Ah!" cried she, full of terror. "I am betrayed and carried off by this merchant. Oh, that I had died rather than have fallen into his power!"

But the King took hold of her hand and said, "No merchant am I, but a king, and no baser of birth than yourself. It is because of my overmastering love for you that I have carried you off by cunning. The first time I saw your picture I fell fainting to the earth."

When the Princess of the Golden Palace heard this she became more trustful, and her heart inclined favorably towards him, so that she willingly consented to become his wife.

It happened, however, as they were still journeying on the open sea, that Faithful John, as he sat in the forepart of the ship and made music, caught sight of three ravens in the air flying overhead. Then he stopped playing and listened to what they said one to another, for he understood them quite well.

The first one cried, "Aye, there goes the beautiful Princess of the Golden Palace."

"Yes," answered the second. "But he has not got her safe yet."

And the third said, "He has her, though. She sits beside him in the ship."

Then the first one spoke again, "What does that avail him? When they come on land a fox-red horse will spring towards them. Then will the King try to mount him, and if he does, the horse will rise with him into the air so that he will never see his bride again."

The second raven asked, "Is there no remedy?"

"Oh yes. If another man mounts quickly, and takes the pistol out of the holster and shoots the horse dead with it, he will save the young King. But who knows that? And moreover he that knows and does it will become stone from toe to knee."

Then said the second raven, "I know more. If the horse should be killed, the young King will not even then be sure of his bride. When they arrive at the castle there will lie a wrought bridal shirt in a dish, and it will seem all woven of gold and silver. But it is really of sulphur and pitch, and if he puts it on it will burn him to the marrow of his bones."

The third raven said, "Is there no remedy?"

"Oh yes," answered the second. "If another man with gloves on picks up the shirt and throws it into the fire, so that it is consumed, then is the young King delivered. But what avails that? He who knows and does it will be turned into stone from his heart to his knee."

Then spoke the third, "I know yet more. Even when the bridal shirt is burnt up, the King is not sure of his bride. When at the wedding the dance begins and the young Queen dances, she will suddenly grow pale and fall to the earth as if she were dead. And unless someone lifts her up and takes three drops of blood from her right breast, she will die. But he that knows and does this will become stone from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot."

When the ravens had spoken thus among themselves they flew away. Faithful John had understood it all, and from that time he remained quiet and sad, for he thought to himself that were he to conceal what he had heard from his master, misfortune would befall. Yet were he to reveal it his own life would be sacrificed.

At last, however, he said within himself, "I will save my master, though I myself should perish!"

So when they came on land, it happened just as the ravens had foretold: there sprang forward a splendid fox-red horse.

"Come on!" said the King. "He shall carry me to the castle." And he was going to mount, when Faithful John passed before him and mounted quickly, drew the pistol out of the holster, and shot the horse dead.

Then the other servants of the King cried out (for they did not wish well to Faithful John), "How shameful to kill that beautiful animal that was to have carried the King to his castle."

But the King said, "Hold your tongues, and let him be. He is my Faithful John. He knows what is the good of it."

Then they went up to the castle, and there stood in the hall a dish, and the wrought bridal shirt that lay on it shone like gold and silver. The young King went up to it and was going to put it on, but Faithful

John pushed him away, picked it up with his gloved hands, threw it quickly on the fire, and there let it burn.

The other servants began grumbling again and said, "Look, he is even burning up the King's bridal shirt!"

But the young King said, "Who knows but that there may be a good reason for it? Let him be! He is my Faithful John."

Then the wedding feast was held, and the bride led the dance. Faithful John watched her carefully, and all at once she grew pale and fell down as if she were dead. Then he went quickly to her and carried her into a chamber hard by, laid her down, and kneeling, took three drops of blood from her right breast. Immediately she drew breath again and raised herself up.

But the young King, witnessing all and not knowing why Faithful John had done this, grew very angry and cried out, "Throw him into prison!"

The next morning Faithful John was condemned to death and led to the gallows. And as he stood there ready to die, he said, "He who is about to die is permitted to speak once before his end. May I claim that right?"

"Yes," answered the King. "It is granted to you."

Then said Faithful John, "I have been condemned unjustly, for I have always been faithful." And he related how he had heard on the sea voyage the talk of the ravens, and how he had done all in order to save his master.

Then cried the King, "O my Faithful John, pardon! pardon! Lead him down!"

But Faithful John, as he spoke the last words, fell lifeless and became stone.

The King and Queen had great grief because of this and the King said, "Ah, how could I have rewarded such faithfulness with evil?" And he caused the stone image to be lifted up and put to stand in his sleeping room by the side of his bed. And as often as he saw it he wept and said, "Would that I could bring you back to life, my Faithful John!"

After some time the Queen bore twins—two little sons—that grew and thrived and were the joy of their parents. One day when the Queen was in church, the two children were sitting and playing with their father, and he gazed at the stone image full of sadness, sighed, and cried, "Oh, that I could bring you back to life, my Faithful John!"

Then the stone began to speak and said, "Yes, you can bring me back to life again, if you will bestow therefor your best-beloved."

Then cried the King, "All that I have in the world will I give up for you!"

The stone went on to say, "If you will cut off the heads of your two children with your own hand, and besmear me with their blood, I shall receive life again."

The King was horror-stricken at the thought that he must put his beloved children to death. But he remembered all John's faithfulness and how he had died for him, and he drew his sword and cut off his children's heads with his own hand. And when he had besmeared the stone with their blood, life returned to it, and Faithful John stood alive and well before him.

And he said to the King, "Your faithfulness shall not be unrewarded!" And taking up the heads of the children, he set them on again and besmeared the wound with their blood, upon which in a moment they were whole again, and jumped about and went on playing as if nothing had happened to them.

Now was the King full of joy, and when he saw the Queen coming he put the Faithful John and the two children in a great chest.

When she came in he said to her, "Have you prayed in church?"

"Yes," answered she. "But I was thinking all the while of Faithful John and how he came to such great misfortune through us."

"Then," said he, "dear wife, we can give him life again. But it will cost us both our little sons, whom we must sacrifice."

The Queen grew pale and sick at heart, but said, "We owe it him, because of his great faithfulness."

Then the King rejoiced because she thought as he did, and he went and unlocked the chest and took out the children and Faithful John, and said, "God be praised, he is delivered, and our little sons are ours again." And he related to her how it had come to pass.

After that they all lived together in happiness to their lives' end.

IRON HANS

THERE WAS once a king whose castle was surrounded by a forest full of game. One day he sent a huntsman out to shoot a deer, but he never came back.

"Perhaps an accident has happened to him," said the King.

Next day he sent out two more huntsmen to look for him, but they did not return either. On the third day he sent for all his huntsmen and said to them, "Search the whole forest without ceasing until you have found all three."

But not a single man of all these, nor one of the pack of hounds they

took with them, ever came back. From this time forth no one would venture into the forest. So there it lay, wrapped in silence and solitude, with only an occasional eagle or hawk circling over it.

This continued for several years, and then one day a strange huntsman sought an audience of the King and offered to penetrate into the dangerous wood. The King, however, would not give him permission, and said, "It's not safe. And I am afraid if you go in that you will never come out again, any more than all the others."

The huntsman answered, "Sire, I will take the risk upon myself. I do not know fear."

So the huntsman went into the wood with his dog. Before long the dog started up some game and wanted to chase it, but hardly had he taken a few steps when he came to a deep pool and could go no farther. A naked arm appeared out of the water, seized him, and drew him down.

When the huntsman saw this, he went back and fetched three men with pails to empty the pool. When they got to the bottom they found a wild man whose body was as brown as rusty iron, and whose hair hung down over his face to his knees. They bound him with cords and carried him away to the castle. There was great excitement over the wild man, and the King had an iron cage made for him in the courtyard. He forbade anyone to open the door of the cage on pain of death, and the Queen had to keep the key in her own charge. After this anybody could walk in the forest with safety.

The King had a little son eight years old, and one day he was playing in the courtyard. In his play his golden ball fell into the cage. The boy ran up and said, "Give me back my ball."

"Not until you have opened the door," said the wild man.

"No, I can't do that," said the boy. "My father has forbidden it." And then he ran away.

Next day he came again and asked for his ball. The man said, "Open my door!" But he would not.

On the third day the King went out hunting, and the boy came again and said, "Even if I would, I could not open the door. I have not got the key."

Then the wild man said, "It is lying under your mother's pillow. You can easily get it."

The boy, who was very anxious to have his ball back, threw his scruples to the winds and fetched the key. The door was very stiff and he pinched his fingers in opening it. As soon as it was open the wild man came out, gave the boy his ball, and hurried away. The boy was now very frightened and cried out, "Oh wild man, don't go away, or I shall be beaten!"

The wild man turned back, picked up the boy, put him on his shoulder, and walked hurriedly off into the wood.

When the King came home he saw at once the empty cage and asked the Queen how it had come about. She knew nothing about it and went to look for the key, which was of course gone. They called the boy but there was no answer. The King sent people out into the fields to look for him, but all in vain. He was gone. The King easily guessed what had happened, and great grief fell on the royal household.

When the wild man got back into the depths of the dark forest, he took the boy down off his shoulder and said, "You will never see your father and mother again, but I will keep you here with me because you had pity on me and set me free. If you do as you are told, you will be well treated. I have treasures and gold enough and to spare, more than anybody in the world."

He made a bed of moss for the boy, on which he went to sleep. Next morning the man led him to a spring and said, "You see this golden well is bright and clear as crystal? You must sit by it and take care that nothing falls into it, or it will be contaminated. I shall come every evening to see if you have obeyed my orders."

The boy sat down on the edge of the spring to watch it. Sometimes he would see a golden fish or a golden snake darting through it, and he guarded it well so that nothing should fall into it. One day as he was sitting like this his finger pained him so much that involuntarily he dipped it into the water. He drew it out very quickly but saw that it was gilded, and although he tried hard to clean it, it remained golden. In the evening Iron Hans came back, looked at the boy, and said, "What has happened to the well today?"

"Nothing. Nothing," he answered, keeping his finger behind his back so that Iron Hans should not see it.

But he said, "You have dipped your finger into the water. It does not matter this time, but take care that nothing of the kind occurs again."

Early next morning the boy took his seat by the spring again to watch. His finger still hurt very much and he put his hand up above his head, but unfortunately in so doing he brushed a hair into the well. He quickly took it out, but it was already gilded. When Iron Hans came in the evening, he knew very well what had happened.

"You have let a hair fall into the well," he said. "I will overlook it once more, but if it happens for the third time, the well will be polluted, and you can no longer stay with me."

On the third day the boy again sat by the well, but he took good care not to move his finger, however much it might hurt. The time seemed very long to him as he looked at his face reflected in the water. As he bent over further and further to look into his eyes, his long hair fell over

his shoulder right into the water. He started up at once, but not before his whole head of hair had become golden and glittered like the sun. You may imagine how frightened the poor boy was. He took his pocket handkerchief and tied it over his head, so that Iron Hans should not see it. But he knew all about it before he came and at once said, "Take that handkerchief off your head." And then all the golden hair tumbled out.

All the poor boy's excuses were no good. "You have not stood the test and you can no longer stay here. You must go out into the world, and there you will learn the meaning of poverty. But as your heart is not bad, and as I wish you well, I will grant you one thing. When you are in great need, go to the forest and cry 'Iron Hans,' and I will come and help you. My power is great, greater than you think, and I have gold and silver in abundance."

So the King's son left the forest and wandered over trodden and untrodden paths till he reached a great city. He tried to get work, but he could not find any. Besides he knew no trade by which to make a living. At last he went to the castle and asked if they would employ him. The courtiers did not know what use they could make of him, but they were taken with his appearance and said he might stay. At last the cook took him into his service, and said he might carry wood and water for him and sweep up the ashes.

One day, as there was no one else at hand, the cook ordered him to carry the food up to the royal table. As he did not want his golden hair to be seen, he kept his cap on. Nothing of the sort had ever happened in the presence of the King before, and he said, "When you come into the royal presence, you must take your cap off."

"Alas, Sire," he said, "I cannot take it off. I have a bad wound on my head."

Then the King ordered the cook to be called, and asked how he could take such a boy into his service, and ordered him to be sent away at once. But the cook was sorry for him and exchanged him for the gardener's boy.

Now the boy had to dig and hoe, plant and water, in every kind of weather. One day in the summer when he was working alone in the garden, it was very hot and he took off his cap for the fresh air to cool his head. When the sun shone on his hair it glittered so that the beams penetrated right into the Princess' bedroom, and she sprang up to see what it was. She discovered the youth and called to him, "Bring me a nosegay, young man."

He hurriedly put on his cap, picked a lot of wild flowers, and tied them up. On his way up to the Princess, the gardener met him and said, "How can you take such poor flowers to the Princess? Cut another

bouquet quickly, and be sure they are the choicest and rarest flowers."

"Oh no," said the youth. "The wild flowers have a sweeter scent than the garden flowers and will please the Princess better."

As soon as he went into the room the Princess said, "Take off your cap. It is not proper for you to wear it before me."

He answered again, "I may not take it off because I have a wound on my head."

But she took hold of the cap and pulled it off, and all his golden hair tumbled over his shoulders in a shower. It was quite a sight. He tried to get away, but she took hold of his arm and gave him a handful of ducats. He took them, but he cared nothing for the gold and gave it to the gardener for his children to play with.

Next day the Princess again called him to bring her a bunch of wild flowers. When he brought it she immediately clutched at his cap to pull it off, but he held it on with both hands. Again she gave him a handful of ducats, but he would not keep them, and gave them to the gardener's children. The third day the same thing happened, but she could not take off his cap, and he would not keep the gold.

Not long after this the kingdom was invaded. The King assembled his warriors. He did not know whether they would be able to conquer his enemies or not, as they were very powerful and had a mighty army. Then the gardener's assistant said, "I have been brought up to fight. Give me a horse and I will go too."

The others laughed and said, "When we are gone, find one for yourself. We will leave one behind in the stable for you."

When they were gone, he went and got the horse out. It was lame in one leg and hobbled along, humpety-hump, humpety-hump. Nevertheless, he mounted it and rode away to the dark forest. When he came to the edge of it, he called three times, "Iron Hans," as loud as he could, till the rocks and trees resounded with it.

The wild man appeared immediately and said, "What do you want?"

"I want a strong horse to go to the war."

"You shall have it, and more besides."

The wild man went back into the wood, and before long a groom came out, leading a fiery charger with snorting nostrils. Behind him followed a great body of warriors, all in armor and their swords gleaming in the sun. The youth handed over his three-legged steed to the groom, mounted the other, and rode away at the head of the troop.

When he approached the battlefield a great many of the King's men had already fallen, and before long the rest would have to give in. Then the youth, at the head of his iron troop, charged and bore down the enemy like a mighty wind, smiting everything which came in their

way. They tried to flee, but the youth fell upon them and did not stop while one remained alive.

Instead of joining the King, he led his troop straight back to the wood and called Iron Hans again.

"What do you want?" asked the wild man.

"Take back your charger and your troop, and give me back my three-legged steed."

His request was granted and he rode his three-legged steed home.

When the King returned to the castle, his daughter met him at the gate and congratulated him on his victory.

"It was not I who won it," he said, "but a strange knight who came to my assistance with his troop." His daughter asked who the strange knight was, but the King did not know. He said, "He pursued the enemy and I have not seen him since."

She asked the gardener about his assistant, but he laughed and said, "He has just come home on his three-legged horse, and the others made fun of him and said, 'Here comes our hobbler back again,' and asked which hedge he had been sleeping under. He answered, 'I did my best, and without me things would have gone badly.' Then they laughed at him more than ever."

The King said to his daughter. "I will give a great feast lasting three days, and you shall throw a golden apple. Perhaps the unknown knight will come among the others to try and catch it."

When notice was given of the feast, the youth went to the wood and called Iron Hans.

"What do you want?" asked the wild man.

"I want to secure the King's golden apple."

"It is as good as yours already," answered Iron Hans. "You shall have a tawny suit and ride a proud chestnut."

When the day arrived the youth took his place among the other knights, but no one knew him. The Princess stepped forward and threw the apple among the knights, and he was the only one who could catch it. As soon as he had it he rode away.

On the second day Iron Hans fitted him out as a white knight riding a gallant gray. Again he caught the apple, and he did not stay a minute, but hurried away as before.

The King now grew angry and said, "This must not be. He must come before me and give me his name."

He gave an order that if the knight made off again he was to be pursued and brought back.

On the third day the youth received from Iron Hans a black outfit and a fiery black charger.

Again he caught the apple, but as he was riding off with it the King's

people chased him, and one came so near that he wounded him in the leg. Still he escaped, but his horse galloped so fast that his helmet fell off, and they all saw that he had golden hair. So they rode back and told the King what they had seen.

Next day the Princess asked the gardener about his assistant.

"He is working in the garden. The queer fellow went to the feast, and he came back only last night. He has shown my children three golden apples which he won."

The King ordered him to be brought before him. When he appeared he still wore his cap, but the Princess went up to him and took it off. Then all his golden hair fell over his shoulders, and it was so beautiful that they were all amazed by it.

"Are you the knight who came to the feast every day in a different color, and who caught the three golden apples?" asked the King.

"Yes," he answered. "And here are the apples," he said, bringing them out of his pocket and giving them to the King. "If you want further proof, here is the wound in my leg given me by your people when they pursued me. But I am also the knight who helped you to conquer the enemy."

"If you can do such deeds you are no gardener's boy. Tell me who is your father?"

"My father is a powerful king, and I have plenty of gold—as much as ever I want."

"I see very well," said the King, "that we owe you many thanks. Can I make you a gift or do anything to please you?"

"Yes," he answered, "indeed, you can. Give me your daughter to be my wife!"

The maiden laughed and said, "He does not beat about the bush! But I saw long ago that he was no gardener's boy."

Then she went up to him and kissed him.

His father and mother came to the wedding, and they were full of joy for they had long given up all hope of ever seeing their dear son again.

As they were all sitting at the wedding feast, the music suddenly stopped, the doors flew open, and a proud king walked in at the head of a great following. He went up to the bridegroom, embraced him, and said, "I am Iron Hans, who was bewitched and changed into a wild man, but you have broken the spell and set me free. All the treasure that I have is now your own."

THE YOUTH WHO COULD NOT SHIVER AND SHAKE

A FATHER had two sons, the eldest clever and sensible, but the younger was so stupid that he could neither learn nor understand anything, and people would say, "What a burden that stupid boy must be to his father."

Whatever the father wanted done, Jack, the eldest boy, was obliged to do, even to take messages, for his brother was too stupid to understand or remember. But Jack was a terrible coward, and if his father wished him to go anywhere late in the evening, and the road led through the churchyard, he would say, "Oh, no, father, I can't go there, it makes me tremble and shake so."

Sometimes when they sat round the fire in the evening, while someone told stories that frightened him, he would say, "Please don't go on, it makes me shake all over."

The youngest boy, seated in his corner among the listeners, would open his eyes quite wide and say, "I can't think what he means by saying it makes him shiver and shake; it must be something very wonderful that could make me shiver and shake."

At last one day the father spoke to his youngest son very plainly and said, "Listen, you there in the corner: you are growing tall and strong, you must learn very soon to earn your own living. See how your brother works, while you do nothing but run and jump about all day."

"Well, father," he replied, "I am quite ready to earn my own living when you like, if I may only learn to shiver and shake. for I don't know how to do that at all."

His brother laughed at this speech, and said to himself, "What a simpleton my brother is! He will have to sweep the streets by and by or else starve."

His father sighed and said, "You will never get your living by that, boy, but you will soon learn to shiver and shake, no doubt."

Just at this moment the sexton of the church came in, and the father related the trouble he was in about his youngest son who was so silly and unable to learn. "What do you think he said to me when I told him he must learn to earn his own living?" asked the father.

"Something silly, I suppose," answered the sexton.

"Silly, indeed! he said he wished he could learn to shiver and shake."

"Oh!" cried the sexton, "let him come to me, I'll soon manage that for him; he won't be long learning to shiver and shake if I have him with me."

The father was delighted with this proposal; it was really a good be-

ginning for his stupid son. So the sexton took the youth in hand at once, led him to the church tower, and made him help to ring the bells. For the first two days he liked it very well, but on the third at midnight the sexton roused him out of his sleep to toll the passing bell; he had to mount to the highest part of the church tower.

"You will soon learn what it is to shiver and shake now, young man," thought the sexton, but he did not go home, as we shall hear later on. The youth walked through the churchyard and mounted the steps to the belfry without feeling the least fear, but just as he reached the bell rope, he saw a figure in white standing on the steps.

"Who's there?" he cried. But the figure neither moved nor spoke. "Answer me," he said, "or take yourself off; you have no business here."

But the sexton, who had disguised himself to frighten the boy, remained immovable, for he wished to be taken for a ghost, but Hans was not to be frightened. He exclaimed, for the second time, "What do you want here? Speak, if you are an honest man, or I will throw you down the steps."

The sexton, thinking he could not intend to do anything so dreadful, answered not a word, but stood still, as if he were made of stone. "Once more, I ask you what you want," said Hans; and as there was still no answer, he sprung upon the sham ghost, and giving him a push, he rolled down ten steps, and falling into a corner, there remained.

Thereupon Hans went back to the bell, tolled it for the proper number of minutes, then went home, laid himself down without saying a word, and went fast asleep.

The sexton's wife waited a long time for her husband, and finding he did not come home she became alarmed, and going to Hans, woke him and said, "Do you know why my husband is staying out so late—he was with you in the tower I suppose?"

"There was someone standing on the top of the steps when I went into the belfry dressed in white, and as he would not answer a word when I spoke to him, I took him for a thief and kicked him downstairs. We will go and see who it is; if it should be your husband I shall be sorry, but of course I did not know."

The wife ran out to the tower and found her husband lying in a corner groaning, for he had broken his leg. Then she went to the father of Hans with a loud outcry against the boy. "Your son," cried she, "has brought bad luck to the house; he has thrown my husband down the steps and broken his leg; he shan't stay with us any longer, send for him home."

Then the father was terribly vexed, sent for his son, and scolded

him. "What do you mean, you wretched boy," he said, "by these wicked tricks?"

"Father," answered the boy, "hear what I have to say. I never meant to do wrong, but when I saw a white figure standing there in the night, of course I thought it was there for some bad purpose. I did not know it was the sexton, and I warned him three times what I would do, if he did not answer."

"Ah! yes, you are the plague of my life," said his father. "Now get out of my sight, and never let me see you again."

"Yes, father, I will go right willingly tomorrow, and then if I learn to shiver and shake, I shall acquire knowledge that will enable me to earn my living at all events."

"Learn what you like," said his father, "it's all the same to me. There are fifty dollars, take them and go out into the world when you please; but don't tell any one where you come from, or who is your father, for I am ashamed to own you."

"Father," said Hans, "I will do just as you tell me; your orders are very easy to perform."

At daybreak the next morning, the youth put the fifty dollars into his pocket, and went out into the highroad, saying to himself as he walked on, "When shall I learn to shiver and shake—when shall I learn to be afraid?"

Presently a man met him on the road, overheard what he said, and saw at once that the young man was fearless. He quickly joined him, and they walked a little way together till they came to a spot where they could see a gallows.

"Look," he said, "there is a tree where seven men have been married with the ropemaker's daughter, and have learned how to swing; if you only sit down here and watch them till night comes on, I'll answer for it you will shiver and shake before morning."

"I never had a better opportunity," answered the youth. "That is very easily done. You come to me again early tomorrow morning, and if it teaches me to shiver and shake, you shall have my fifty dollars."

Then the young man went and seated himself under the gallows and waited till the evening, and feeling cold he lighted a fire; but at midnight the wind rose and blew so fiercely and chill, that even a large fire could not warm him.

The high cold wind made the bodies of the murderers swing to and fro, and he thought to himself, if I am so cold down here by the fire, they must be frozen up there; and after pitying them for some time he climbed up, untied the ropes and brought down all the seven bodies, stirred the fire into a blaze, and seated them round it so close, that their

clothes caught fire. Finding they did not move, he said to them, "Sit farther back, will you, or I will hang you up again." But the dead could not hear him, they only sat silent and let their rags burn.

Then Hans became angry, and said, "If you will not move, there is no help for it; I must not let you burn, I must hang you up." So he hung the seven bodies up again all in a row, then laid himself down by the fire and fell fast asleep.

In the morning the man came, according to his promise, hoping to get the fifty dollars. "Well, I suppose you know now what it is to shiver and shake?" he said.

"No, indeed," he replied. "Why should I? Those men up there have not opened their mouths once; and when I seated them round the fire, they allowed their old rags to burn without moving, and if I had not hung the bodies up again, they would have been burned also." The man looked quite scared when he heard this, and went away without attempting to ask for the fifty dollars.

Then Hans continued his journey, and again said aloud to himself, "I wonder what this shivering and shaking can be."

A wagoner walking along the road by his horses overtook him, and asked who he was.

"I don't know," he replied.

The wagoner asked again, "Why are you here?"

"I can't tell," said Hans.

"Who is your father?"

"I dare not say."

"What were you grumbling about just now, when I came up with you?"

"I want to learn to shiver and shake," said Hans.

"Don't talk nonsense," said the wagoner. "Come with me, I will show you a little of the world, and find you something to do better than that."

So the young man went with the wagoner, and about evening they arrived at an inn, where they put up for the night. No sooner, however, did Hans enter the room than he muttered to himself, "Oh! if I could only learn to shiver and shake."

The landlord heard him, and said with a laugh, "if that is all you wish to learn, I can tell you of a splendid opportunity in this part of the world."

"Ah! be silent now," said the landlady. "You know how many people have already lost their lives through their curiosity. It would be a pity for a nice young man like this, with such fine blue eyes, never to see daylight again."

But Hans spoke for himself at once. "If it is so bad as you say," he

cried, "I should like to try as soon as possible; all I want is to learn how to shiver and shake, so tell me what I am to do." And the youth gave the landlord no rest till he had explained the matter to him.

"Well," he said at last, "not far from here stands an enchanted castle, where you could easily learn to shiver and shake, if you remain in it. The king of the country has promised to give his daughter in marriage to any one who will venture to sleep in the castle for three nights, and she is as beautiful a young lady as the sun ever shone upon. Rich and valuable treasures in the castle are watched over by wicked spirits, and any one who could destroy these goblins and demons, and set free the treasures which are rotting in the castle, would be made a rich and lucky man. Lots of people have gone into the castle full of hope that they should succeed, but they have not been heard of since."

Hans was not in the least alarmed by this account, and the next morning he started off early to visit the king.

When he was admitted to the palace the king looked at him earnestly, and seemed much pleased with his appearance; then he said, "Do you really wish to be allowed to remain for three nights in the enchanted castle?"

"Yes," replied Hans, "I do request it."

"You can take no living creature with you," said the king; "what else will you have?"

"I only ask for a fire, a turning lathe, a cutting board, and a knife," he replied.

To this the king readily agreed, and these articles Hans was permitted to take into the castle during the day. When night came, he took up his abode in one of the rooms, lighted a fire which soon burned brightly, placed the turning lathe and the cutting board near it, and sat down on the cutting board, determined to make himself comfortable. Presently he exclaimed, "Oh, when shall I learn to shiver and shake? Not here, I am certain, for I am feeling too comfortable."

But at midnight, just as he had stirred the fire into a blaze, he suddenly heard in a corner the cry of a cat: "Miou, miou! how cold it is!"

"What a fool you must be, then," cried Hans, "to stay out there in the cold; come and seat yourself by the fire, and get warm if you will."

As he spoke, two very large black cats sprung forward furiously, seated themselves on each side of the fire, and stared at him with wild, fiery eyes. After a while, when the cats became thoroughly warm, they spoke, and said, "Comrade, will you have a game of cards?"

"With all my heart," answered Hans; "but first stretch out your feet, and let me examine your claws."

The cats stretched out their paws. "Ah!" said he, "what long nails you have, and now that I have seen your fingers, I would rather be excused from playing cards with you."

Then he killed them both, and threw them out of the window into the moat. As soon as he had settled these two intruders, he seated himself again by the fire, hoping to have a little rest; but in a few moments there rushed out from every corner of the room black cats and black dogs in a fiery chain one after another, till there seemed no end to them. They mewed, and barked, and growled, and at length jumped on his fire and scattered it about the room, as if they wished to put it out.

For awhile he watched them in silence, till at last he got angry, and seizing his cutting board, exclaimed, "Be off! you horrid creatures!" and then rushing after them, he chased them round the room. Some few escaped in the clamor, but the rest he killed with his cutting board, and threw into the moat.

As soon as he had cleared the room, he rekindled his fire, by gathering the sparks together, and sat down to warm himself in the blaze. After a time he began to feel so sleepy that his eyes would not keep open any longer; so he looked round the room, and espied in a corner a large bed. "That is the very place for me," he said, rising, and laying himself upon it; but just as he was closing his eyes to sleep, the bed began to move about the room, and at last increased its speed, and went off at a gallop through the castle.

"All right," cried Hans, "now, go on again." At this the bed started off, as if six horses were harnessed to it, through the doorway, down the steps, to the great gates of the castle, against which it came with a great bump, and tumbled, legs uppermost, throwing all the pillows and blankets on Hans, who lay underneath, as if a mountain were upon him. He struggled out from the load, and said, "Anyone may travel in that fashion who likes, but I don't." So he laid himself down again by the fire, and slept till the daybreak.

In the morning the king came to the castle, and, as he caught sight of Hans lying by the fire asleep, he thought the evil spirits had killed him, and that he was dead. "Alas!" said the king, "I am very sorry; it is a great pity that such a fine youth should lose his life in this manner."

But Hans, who heard, sprang up in a moment and exclaimed, "No, King, I am not dead yet." The king, quite astonished and joyful at finding him unhurt, asked him how he had passed the night?

"Oh, very pleasantly indeed," replied Hans; and then he related to the king all that had passed, which amused him very much.

On returning to the inn, the landlord stared at him with wide open eyes: "I never expected to see you again alive; but I suppose you have learned to shiver and shake by this time."

"Not I," he replied; "I believe it is useless for me to try, for I never shall learn to be afraid."

The second night came, and he again went up to the old castle, and seated himself by the fire, singing the burden of his old song, "When shall I learn to shiver and shake?"

At midnight he heard a noise, as of something falling. It came nearer; then for a little while all was quiet; at last, with a tremendous scream, half the body of a man came tumbling down the chimney, and fell right in front of Hans.

"Holloa!" he cried, "all that noise, and only half a man; where's the other half?" At this, the noise and tumult began again, and, amidst yellings and howlings, the other half of the man fell on the hearth.

"Wait," said Hans, rising; "I will stir the fire into a blaze first." But when he turned to sit down again, he found that the two halves of the man had joined, and there sat an ugly looking object in his place. "Stay," cried the young man; "I did not bargain for this; that seat is mine."

The ugly man tried to push Hans away; but he was too quick for him, and putting out all his strength, he dislodged the creature from his seat, and placed himself again upon it.

Immediately there came tumbling down the chimney nine more of these horrid men, one after the other; each of them held a human thigh-bone in his hand, and the first who appeared brought out two skulls, and presently they set up the nine bones like skittles, and began to play, with the skulls for balls.

"Shall I play with you?" asked Hans, after he had looked on for some time.

"Yes, willingly," they replied, "if you have any money."

"Plenty," he said; "but your balls are not quite round." So he took the skulls and turned them on his lathe. "Now they will roll better; come on, let us set to work."

The strange men played with great spirit, and won a few of his dollars; but all at once the cock crowed, and they vanished from his eyes. After they were gone he laid himself down and slept peacefully till the king arrived, and asked him what had happened, and how it had fared with him during the night.

"Well," said Hans, "I played a game of skittles with some horrid-looking fellows who had bones and skulls for skittles and balls, I won sometimes, and I lost a couple of dollars."

"Did you not shiver and shake?" asked the king, in surprise.

"Not I, indeed! I wish I could! Oh, if I only knew how to shiver and shake."

The third night came, and found our hero once more seated on his bench by the fire, and saying quite mournfully, "When shall I ever learn to shiver and shake?"

As he spoke there came into the room six tall men, bearing a coffin containing a dead man.

"Ah!" said Hans, "I know what you have there, it is the body of my cousin. He has been dead two days." Then he beckoned with his finger and said, "Come here, little cousin, I should like to see you!"

The men placed the coffin on the ground before him, and took off the lid. Hans touched the face, and it felt as cold as ice. "Wait," he said, "I will soon warm it!" so he went to the fire, and warming his hand, laid it on the face of the dead man, which remained as cold as ever.

At last he took him out of the coffin, carried him to the fire, and placed him on his lap, while he rubbed the hands and chest that he might cause the blood to circulate, but all to no purpose; the body remained as cold as before. Presently he remembered that when two lie in bed together they warm each other, so he placed the dead man in bed, covered him over, and lay down beside him. After awhile this seemed to produce warmth in the body, the blood began to circulate, and at last the dead man moved and spoke.

"There, now, dear cousin," said Hans, "see, I have warmed you into life again, as I said I could." But the dead man sprang up and cried, "Yes, and now I will strangle you."

"What!" cried Hans, "is that your gratitude? You may as well go back into your coffin again." He leaped out of bed as he spoke, and, seizing the body, he threw it into the coffin and shut the lid down closely upon it.

Then the six tall men walked in, lifted up the coffin and carried it away.

"That's over," said Hans. "Oh! I am sure nothing will ever teach me to shiver and shake."

As he spoke a man walked in who was taller and larger than any of the others, and the look of his eyes was frightful; he was old, and wore a long white beard.

"You wretched creature," cried the man, "I will soon teach you what it is to shiver and shake, for you shall die."

"Not so fast, friend," answered Hans. "You cannot kill me without my own consent."

"I will soon have you on the ground," replied the monster.

"Softly, softly, do not boast; you may be strong, but you will find that I am stronger than you."

"That is to be proved," said the old man; "if you are stronger than I am, I will let you go. Come, we will try."

The old man, followed by Hans, led the way through long dark passages and cellars, till they saw the reflection of a smith's fire, and presently came to a forge. Then the old man took an axe, and with one blow cut through the anvil right down to the ground.

"I can do better than that," said Hans, taking up the axe and going towards another anvil. The monster was so surprised at this daring on the part of Hans that he followed him closely, and as he leaned over to watch what the youth was going to do, his long white beard fell on the anvil. Hans raised his axe, split the anvil at one blow, wedging the old man's beard in the opening at the same time.

"Now I have got you, old fellow," cried Hans, "prepare for the death you deserve." Then he took up an iron bar and beat the old man till he cried for mercy, and promised to give him all the riches that were hidden in the castle.

At this Hans drew out the axe from the anvil, and set the old man's beard free, while he watched him closely. He kept his word, however, and leading the young man back to the castle, pointed out to him a cellar in which were three immense chests full of gold.

"There is one for the poor," said he; "another for the king, and the third for yourself."

Hans was about to thank him, when the cock crowed, and the old man vanished, leaving the youth standing in the dark.

"I must find my way out of this place," he said, after groping about for some time, but at last daylight penetrated into the vaults, and he succeeded in reaching his old room, and lying down by the fire, slept soundly till he was aroused by the king's arrival.

"Well," he said, in a glad voice when he saw the young man alive, "have you learned to shiver and shake yet?"

"No!" replied Hans, "what was there to make me fear? My dead cousin came to see me, and a bearded old man tried to conquer me, but I managed him, and he has shown me where to find hidden treasures of gold, and how could I shiver and shake at these visitors?"

"Then," said the king, "you have released the castle from enchantment. I will give you, as I promised, my daughter in marriage."

"That is good news," cried Hans. "But I have not learned to shiver and shake after all."

The gold was soon after brought away from the castle, and the marriage celebrated with great pomp. Young Prince Hans, as he was now called, did not seem quite happy after all. Not even the love of his bride

could satisfy him. He was always saying: "When shall I learn to shiver and shake?"

This troubled the Princess very much, till her lady's-maid said, "I will help you in this matter; I will show you how to make the Prince shiver and shake, that you may depend upon."

So the Princess agreed to do what the lady's-maid advised.

First she went out to a brook that flowed through the gardens of the palace, and brought in a whole pailful of water, containing tiny fish, which she placed in the room.

"Remember," said the lady's-maid, "when the Prince is asleep in bed, you must throw this pail of water over him; that will make him shiver and shake I am quite certain, and then he will be contented and happy."

So that night while Hans was in bed and asleep, the Princess drew down the bedclothes gently, and threw the cold water with the gudgeons all over him. The little fish wriggled about as they fell on the bed, and the Prince, waking suddenly, exclaimed, "Oh! dear, how I do shiver and shake, what can it be?" Then seeing the Princess standing by his bed, he guessed what she had done.

"Dear wife," he said, "now I am satisfied, you have taught me to shiver and shake at last," and from that hour he lived happily and contented with his wife, for he had learned to shiver and shake—but not to fear.

THE RAVEN

THERE WAS once a queen who had a little daughter still in arms. One day the child was naughty and would not be quiet, whatever her mother might say.

Then she grew impatient, and as the ravens were flying round the castle, she opened the window and said, "I wish you were a raven, that you might fly away, and then I should have peace."

She had hardly said the words when the child was changed into a raven and flew out of the window. She flew straight into a dark wood, and her parents did not know what had become of her. One day a man was passing through this wood and heard the raven calling.

When he was near enough, the raven said, "I am a princess by birth, and I am bewitched, but you can deliver me from the spell."

"What must I do?" asked the man.

"Go further into the wood," she said, "and you will come to a house with an old woman in it. She will offer you food and drink, but you must not take any. If you eat or drink what she offers you, you will fall into a deep sleep, and then you will never be able to deliver me. There is a great heap of tanbark in the garden behind the house. You must stand on it and wait for me. I will come for three days in a coach drawn by four horses which on the first day will be white. On the second day the horses will be chestnut, and on the last day black. If you are not awake, I shall not be delivered."

The man promised to do everything that she asked, but the raven said, "Alas, I know that you will not deliver me! You will take what the woman offers you, and I shall never be freed from the spell."

He promised once more not to touch either the food or the drink, but when he reached the house the old woman said to him, "Poor man, how tired you are! Come and refresh yourself. Eat and drink."

"No," said the man, "I will neither eat nor drink."

But she persisted and said, "Well, if you won't eat, take a sip out of the glass. One sip is nothing." Then he yielded and took a little sip.

About two o'clock he went down into the garden and stood on the tan-heap to wait for the raven. All at once he became so tired that he could not keep on his feet, and he lay down for a moment, not meaning to go to sleep. But he had hardly stretched himself out before his eyelids closed, and he fell fast asleep. He slept so soundly that nothing in the world could have awakened him.

At two o'clock the raven came, drawn by her four white horses. She was already very sad, for she said, "I know he is asleep." She alighted from the carriage, went to him, shook him, and called him, but he did not wake.

Next day at dinnertime the old woman came again and brought him food and drink, but again he refused to touch it. But she left him no peace, till at last she induced him to take a sip from the glass.

Towards two o'clock he again went into the garden and stood on the tan-heap, meaning to wait for the raven. But he suddenly became so tired that he sank down and fell into a deep sleep.

When the raven drove up with her chestnut horses, she was very mournful and said, "I know he is asleep." She went to him but he was fast asleep, and would not wake.

Next day the old woman said, "What is the meaning of this? If you don't eat or drink you will die."

He said, "I must not, and I will not, either eat or drink." She put the dish of food and the glass of wine before him, and when the scent of

the wine reached him he could withstand it no longer and swallowed a good draught.

When the time came he went into the garden and stood on the tan-heap and waited for the raven. But he was more tired than ever, and lay down and slept like a log.

At two o'clock the raven came, drawn by four black horses. The coach and everything about it was black. She herself was in the deepest mourning and said, "Alas! I know he is asleep." She shook him and called him, but she could not wake him.

Finding her efforts in vain, she placed a loaf beside him, a piece of meat, and a bottle of wine. Then she took a golden ring on which her name was engraved, and put it on his finger. Last, she laid a letter by him, saying that the bread, the meat, and the wine were inexhaustible. She also said, "I see that you cannot deliver me here, but if you still wish to do so, come to the Golden Castle of Stromberg. I know that it is still in your power."

Then she seated herself in her coach again and drove to the Golden Castle of Stromberg.

When the man woke and found that he had been asleep, his heart grew heavy and he said, "She certainly must have passed, and I have not delivered her."

Then his eyes fell on the things lying by him and he read the letter which told him all that had occurred. So he got up and went away to find the Golden Castle of Stromberg, but he had no idea where to find it.

When he had wandered about for a long time he came to a dark wood whence he could not find his way out. After walking about in it for a fortnight, he lay down one night under a bush to sleep, for he was very tired. But he heard such lamentations and howling that he could not go to sleep. Then he saw a light glimmering in the distance and went towards it. When he reached it, he found that it came from a house which looked very tiny because a huge giant was standing at the door. He thought, "If I go in and the giant sees me, I shan't escape with my life." But at last he ventured to go forward.

When the giant saw him, he said, "It's a good thing you have appeared, for I have had nothing to eat for an age. I will just swallow you for my supper."

"I had much rather that you did not," said the man. "I do not really like to be eaten. But if you only want something to eat, I have plenty here to satisfy you."

"If you are speaking the truth," said the giant, "you may be quite easy. I was only going to eat you because I had nothing else."

Then they went in and sat down at the table, and the man produced

the bread, the meat, and the wine, which were all inexhaustible. "This just suits me fine," said the giant, and he ate as much as ever he could.

The man said to him, "Can you tell me where to find the Golden Castle of Stromberg?"

The giant said, "I will look at my map. Every town, village, and house is marked upon it."

He fetched the map, but the castle was not to be found.

"It doesn't matter," he said. "I have bigger maps upstairs in my chest. We will look for it there."

At last on a very old map they found the Golden Castle of Stromberg, but it was many thousands of milès away.

"How am I ever to get there?" asked the man.

The giant said, "I have a couple of hours to spare, and I can carry you rather near it. But then I must come back home to look after my wife and child."

Then the giant transported him to within a hundred leagues of the castle and said, "You will be able to find your way easily from here alone." Then he went back, and the man went on till at last he came to the Golden Castle.

It stood on a mountain of glass, and the bewitched maiden drove round and round it every day in her coach. He was delighted to see her again and wanted to go to her at once, but when he tried to climb the mountain, he found it was so slippery that he slid back at every step.

When he found he could not reach her, he grew very sad and said to himself, "I will stay down here below and wait for her."

So he built himself a little hut and lived in it for a whole year, and every day he could see the Princess above, driving round and round the castle, but he could never get to her.

Then one day he saw three robbers fighting, and called out to them, "God be with you!"

They stopped at the sound of his voice, but seeing nothing they began to fight again.

Then he cried again, "God be with you!"

They stopped and looked about, but seeing no one, went on fighting.

Then he cried for the third time, "God be with you!"

Again they stopped and looked about, but as there was no one visible they fell to fighting more savagely than ever.

He said to himself, "I must see what it is all about."

He went up and asked them why they were fighting. One of them said he had found a stick which made any door fly open which it touched. The second said he had found a cloak which made him invisible when he wore it. The third said he had caught a horse which could go any-

where, even up the mountain of glass. They could not decide whether these things should be common property or whether they should divide them.

Then said the man, "I will give you something in exchange for them if you like. I have no money, but I have something more valuable. First, however, I must test your things to see if you are speaking the truth."

They let him get onto the horse, put on the cloak, and take the stick in his hand. When he had got them all, he was nowhere to be seen.

Then he gave them each a sound drubbing and said, "Now you have your deserts, you rascals! You may be satisfied with that."

Then he rode up the glass mountain, and when he reached the castle he found the gate was shut. He touched it with his stick and it flew open.

He entered and went straight up the stairs into the gallery, where the maiden sat with a golden cup of wine before her. She, however, could not see him because he had the cloak on. Then he took the ring she had given him and dropped it into the cup, where it fell with a clink.

She cried, "That is my ring! The man who is to deliver me must be here."

They searched for him all over the castle but could not find him, for he had gone outside, taken off the cloak, and mounted his horse. When the people came to the gate and saw him, they raised cries of joy.

Then he dismounted and took the Princess in his arms. She kissed him, and said, "Now you have delivered me, and tomorrow we will celebrate our marriage."

THE THREE WHITE SNAKES

THERE WAS once a father who was so poor that he could hardly earn enough to keep himself and his son from starving. One day the boy said to him, "Dear father, I see you going about every day looking so sad and tired, that I am determined to go out into the world and try to earn my own living."

Then his father gave him his blessing and took leave of him with many tears. Just at this time a great king was going to war with the king of another country, and the youth took service under him and marched to the battle field as a soldier. In the first conflict with the enemy he was in great danger and had a wonderful escape, for his comrades fell on each side of him. Their commander also was wounded, and several were inclined to take flight and run from the field. But the youth stepped forth to raise their courage, and cried, "No, no, we will never allow our fatherland to sink to the ground!" Then they took courage

and followed their young leader, who led them forward, attacked and quickly vanquished the enemy. When the king heard to whom he owed this great victory, he sent for the youth, raised him to a position of great honor, gave him large treasures, and made him first in the kingdom next to himself.

Now the king had a daughter who was very beautiful, but she was also very whimsical. She had made a vow that she would take no man for a husband who did not promise that if she should die he would allow himself to be buried alive with her in the grave. "If he loves me," she said, "he will not wish to outlive me," and in return for this she would also promise to be buried in the grave with her spouse, should he die first.

THE king's vow had hitherto frightened away all wooers, but the young soldier was so struck with the beauty of the princess that he disregarded the vow, although her father warned him, and said, "Do you know what a terrible promise you will have to make?"

"Yes," replied the young man, "I must be buried with her in the grave if I outlive her; but my love for her is so strong, that I disregard that danger."

Then the king gave his consent, and the marriage was celebrated with great pomp.

After they had lived together for some time in great happiness and contentment, the young queen was seized with a terrible illness from which her physicians were unable to restore her. As she lay dead, the young husband remembered what he had promised and the thought of lying in the grave alive filled him with horror, but there was no escape. The king placed a watch at every outlet from the castle, so that it was not possible to avoid his fate. When the day of the funeral arrived and the body had been carried down and placed in the royal vault, he was taken there also, and the door firmly fastened with locks and bolts. Near to the coffin stood a table upon which were four lights, four loaves of bread, and four bottles of wine, and he knew that when these provisions came to an end, he must starve. So he seated himself, feeling full of grief and sorrow, but with a determination to take only a small piece of bread and the least drop of wine, to make them last.

One day when death seemed nearer than ever, he saw from a corner of the vault just opposite to where he sat, a white snake creep out and approach the body. He rose in horror, thinking it was about to gnaw it, and drawing his sword, exclaimed, as with two blows he cut the snake into three pieces, "As long as I live you shall not touch that."

After a while a second snake crept out of the corner, but as soon as he saw the other lying dead in three pieces, he went back and quickly returned with three green leaves in his mouth. Then he took the three

separate portions of the snake, placed them together and laid a leaf on each wound, and no sooner were they joined, than the snake raised himself as lively as ever, and went away hastily with his companion.

The leaves remained lying on the ground, and as he looked at them, the thoughts of the poor unfortunate man were full of the wonderful properties they possessed, and it suddenly occurred to him that a leaf which could restore a dead snake to life, might be useful to human beings. He stooped and picked up the leaves, then advancing softly towards the body, he laid one on the mouth of the dead, and the others on both the eyes. In a moment he saw the effect of what he had done. The blood began to circulate in the veins and blushed softly in the pale face and lips of his dead wife. She drew a deep breath, opened her closed eyes and exclaimed faintly, "Where am I?"

"Thou art with me, dear wife," answered her husband; and then he told her all that had happened, and how he had wakened her to life.

After taking a little of the wine and bread she became stronger, and was able to rise from the bier and walk to the door of the vault with her husband. Here they knocked and called loudly for a long time, till at last the watchman heard them and word was sent to the king. He came himself very quickly and ordered the door of the vault to be opened; how astonished and joyful he was to find them both alive and uninjured, and to know that his anxiety was over! The whole matter had been a great trouble to him.

The three leaves, the young prince took with him, and gave them to a servant to take care of, saying, "Preserve them carefully for me, and see that they are safe every day; who knows what help they may be to us in any future trouble?"

A great change appeared in the wife of the young prince after this event—it was as if with her return to life, all her love for her husband had vanished from her heart.

Not long after, he wished to take a voyage across the sea to see his old father, and she accompanied him. While they were on board ship, she forgot all the true and great love he had shown for her in trying to restore her to life when she was dead, and made friends with the captain, who was as wicked as herself.

One day when the young prince lay asleep on deck, she called the skipper to her and told him to take her husband by the feet, while she raised his head, and before he was awake enough to save himself, these two wicked people threw him overboard into the sea. As soon as this shameful deed was accomplished, she said to the skipper, "Now let us sail home again and say that the prince has died on the voyage. I will praise and extol you so greatly to my father, that I know he will readily

give his consent to our marriage, and leave the crown to you after his death."

But the faithful servant to whom the prince had entrusted the wonderful leaves saw all that his master's wife had done. Unnoticed, he lowered one of the boats from the ship's side, got on board and very soon discovered the body of the prince. Dragging it hastily into the boat, he rowed away and soon left the traitors far behind. As soon as he felt safely out of sight, he produced the precious leaves which he always carried about with him, laid one on each eye and one on the mouth of the dead man, who very quickly showed signs of life, and was at last sufficiently restored to help in rowing the boat. They both rowed with all their strength day and night, and their little bark flew so swiftly over the waves, that they arrived at the king's palace long before his daughter and the captain.

The king wondered greatly when he saw his son-in-law and the servant enter, and asked them what had happened. But when he heard of his daughter's wickedness, he said, "I can scarcely believe she would act so basely. However, the truth will soon be brought to light. For the present, I advise you both to hide yourselves in a private chamber, and make yourselves quite at home till the ship returns."

The master and servant took the king's advice, and a few days afterwards the large ship made its appearance, and the king's guilty daughter appeared before her father with a sorrowful countenance.

"Why have you come back alone?" he asked. "Where is your husband?"

"Ah! dear father," she replied, "I come home to you in great sorrow, for, during the voyage, my husband was taken suddenly ill and died, and if the good captain had not stood by me and conducted me home, I cannot tell what evil might have happened to me. He stood by my husband's deathbed, and he can tell you all that occurred."

"Oh!" said the king, "I can restore your dead husband to life again, so do not grieve any longer." He threw open the door of the private room as he spoke, and told his son and the servant to come out.

When the wife saw her husband she was thunderstruck, and sank on her knees imploring mercy.

"I can show you no mercy," said the king. "Your husband was not only ready to be buried and die with you, but he used the means which restored you to life, and you have murdered him while he slept, and shall receive the reward you so truly merit."

Then was she with her accomplice placed in a boat full of holes and driven out to sea, where they were soon overwhelmed in the waves and drowned.

THE SINGING BONE

THERE WAS once in a country great trouble about a wild boar, who attacked the peasants in the fields, and had killed and torn to pieces several men with his tusks. The king of the country promised a large reward to anyone who would free the land from this plague. But the animal was so large and strong that no man would even venture near the forest where he lived.

At last, the king made a proclamation that he would give his only daughter in marriage to any man who would bring the wild boar to him dead or alive.

There lived two brothers in that country, the sons of a poor man, who gave notice of their readiness to enter on this perilous undertaking. The eldest, who was clever and crafty, was influenced by pride; the youngest, who was innocent and simple, offered himself out of the kindness of his heart.

Thereupon the king advised that, as the best and safest way would be to take opposite directions in the wood, the eldest was to go in the evening, and the youngest in the morning.

The youngest had not gone far when a little gnome stepped up to him. He held in his hand a black spear, and said, "I will give you this spear because your heart is innocent and good. With this you can go out and discover the wild boar, and he shall not be able to harm you."

He thanked the little man, took the spear, placed it on his shoulder, and, without delay, went farther into the forest. It was not long before he saw the animal coming toward him, and fiercely preparing to spring. But the youth stood still, and held the spear firmly in front of him. In wild rage the fierce beast ran violently toward him, and was met by the spear, on the point of which he threw himself, and, as it pierced him to the heart, he fell dead.

Then the youngster took the dead monster on his shoulder, and went to find his brother. As he approached the other side of the wood, where stood a large hall, he heard music, and found a number of people dancing, drinking wine, and making merry. His eldest brother was amongst them, for he thought the wild boar would not run far away, and he wished to get up his courage for the evening by cheerful company and wine.

When he caught sight of his youngest brother coming out of the forest laden with his booty, the most restless jealousy and malice rose in his heart. But he disguised his bitter feelings and spoke kindly to his brother, and said,

"Come in, and stay with us, dear brother, and rest awhile, and get up your strength by a cup of wine."

So the youth, not suspecting anything wrong, carried the dead boar into his brother's house, and told him of the little man he had met in the wood, who had given him the spear, and how he had killed the wild animal.

The elder brother persuaded him to stay and rest till the evening, and then they went out together in the twilight, and walked by the river till it became quite dark. A little bridge lay across the river, over which they had to pass, and the eldest brother let the young one go before him. When they arrived at the middle of the stream, the wicked man gave his youngest brother a blow from behind, and he fell down dead instantly.

But, fearing he might not be quite dead, he threw the body over the bridge into the river, and through the clear water saw it sink into the sand. After this wicked deed he ran home quickly, took the dead wild boar on his shoulders, and carried it to the king with the pretense that he had killed the animal, and that therefore he could claim the Princess as his wife according to the king's promise.

But these dark deeds are not often concealed, for something happens to bring them to light. Not many years after, a herdsman passing over the bridge with his flock saw beneath him in the sand a little bone as white as snow, and thought that it would make a very nice mouthpiece for his horn.

As soon as they had passed over the bridge, he waded into the middle of the stream, for the water was very shallow, took up the bone, and carried it home to make a mouthpiece for his horn.

But the first time he blew the horn after the bone was in, it filled the herdsman with wonder and amazement, for it began to sing of itself, and these were the words it sang.

*"Ah! dear shepherd, you are blowing your horn
With one of my bones, which night and morn
Lay still unburied, beneath the wave
Where I was thrown in a sandy grave.
I killed the wild boar, and my brother slew me,
And gained the Princess by pretending 'twas he."*

"What a wonderful horn!" said the shepherd, "that can sing by itself; I must take it to my lord, the king."

As soon as the horn was brought before the king and blown by the shepherd, it at once began to sing the same song and the same words.

The king was at first surprised, but his suspicion being aroused, he ordered that the sand under the bridge should be examined immedi-

ately, and then the entire skeleton of the murdered man was discovered.

The wicked brother could not deny the deed; he was ordered to be tied in a sack and drowned, while the remains of his murdered brother were carefully carried to the churchyard and laid to rest in a beautiful grave.

THE MAIDEN WITHOUT HANDS

A MILLER who had by degrees become very poor, had nothing at last left but his mill and a large apple tree behind it. One day when he went into the forest to gather wood, an old man, whom he had never seen before, came towards him, and said, "Why do you take the trouble to cut down wood? I will give you great riches if you will promise to let me have what stands behind your mill."

"That can be no other than my apple tree," thought the miller, "I possess nothing else," so he said to the old man, "Yes, I will let you have it."

Then the stranger smiled maliciously, and said, "In three years I will come again to claim what belongs to me," and after saying this he departed.

As soon as the miller returned home, his wife came towards him and said, "Miller, how have all these riches come so suddenly to our house? All at once every drawer and chest has become full of gold. No one brought it here, and I know not where it came from."

"Oh," replied her husband, "I know all about it. A strange man, whom I met in the wood, promised me great treasures if I would let him have what stood behind the mill. I knew I had nothing there but the large apple tree, so I gave him my promise."

"Oh, husband!" said the wife, in alarm, "that must have been the wizard; he did not mean the apple tree, but our daughter, who was behind the mill, sweeping out the court."

The miller's daughter was a modest and beautiful maiden, and lived in innocence and obedience to her parents for three years, until the day came on which the wicked wizard was to claim her. She knew he was coming, and after washing till she was pure and clean as snow, she drew a circle of white chalk, and stood within it.

The wizard made his appearance very early, but he did not dare to venture over the white circle, therefore he could not get near her. In great anger he said to the miller, "Take away every drop of water, that she may not wash, otherwise I shall have no power over her."

The frightened miller did as he desired, but on the next morning, when the wizard came again, her hands were as pure and clean as ever, for she had wept over them. On this account the wizard was still unable to approach her; so he flew into a rage, and said, "Chop her hands off, otherwise I cannot touch her."

Then the miller was terrified, and exclaimed, "How can I cut off the hands of my own child?"

Then the wicked wizard threatened him and said, "If you will not do as I desire you, then I can claim you instead of your daughter, and carry you off."

The father listened in agony, and in his fright promised to obey. He went to his daughter and said to her, "Oh, my child, unless I cut off your two hands the wizard will take me away with him, and in my anguish I have promised. Help me in my trouble, and forgive me for the wicked deed I have promised to do."

"Dear father," she replied, "do with me what you will, I am your child." Thereupon she placed her two hands on the table before him, and he cut them off. The wizard came next day for the third time, but the poor girl had wept so bitterly over the stumps of her arms, that they were as clean and white as ever. Then he was obliged to give way, for he had lost all right to the maiden.

As soon as the wizard had departed, the miller said, "My child, I have obtained so much good through thy conduct, that for thy whole lifetime I shall hold thee most precious and dear."

"But I cannot stay here, father," she replied, "I am not safe; let me go away with people who will give me the sympathy I need so much."

"I fear such people are very seldom to be found in the world," said her father. However he let her go. So she tied up her maimed arms and went forth on her way at sunrise.

For a whole day she traveled without food, and as night came on, found herself near one of the royal gardens. By the light of the moon she could see many trees, laden with beautiful fruit, but she could not reach them, because the place was surrounded by a moat full of water. She had been without a bite to eat the whole day, and her hunger was so great that she could not help crying out, "Oh, if I were only able to get some of that delicious fruit! I shall die unless I can have something to eat very soon."

Then she knelt down and prayed for help, and while she prayed a guardian fairy appeared and made a channel in the water so that she was able to pass through on dry ground.

When she entered the garden the fairy was with her, although she did not know it, so she walked to a tree full of beautiful pears, not knowing that they had been counted.

Being unable to pluck any without hands, she went quite close to the tree and ate one with her mouth as it hung. One, and no more, just to stay her hunger. The gardener, who saw her with the fairy standing near her, thought it was a spirit, and was too frightened to move or speak.

After having satisfied her hunger, the maiden went and laid herself down among the shrubs and slept in peace. On the following morning, the king, to whom the garden belonged, came out to look at his fruit trees, and when he reached the pear tree and counted the pears, he found one missing. At first he thought it had fallen, but it was not under the tree, so he went to the gardener and asked what had become of it.

Then said the gardener, "There was a ghost in the garden last night who had no hands, and ate a pear off the tree with its mouth."

"How could the ghost get across the water?" asked the king; "and what became of it after eating the pear?"

To this the gardener replied, "Someone came first in snow-white robes from heaven, who made a channel and stopped the flow of the water, so that the ghost walked through on dry ground. It must have been an angel," continued the gardener; "and therefore I was afraid to ask questions or to call out. As soon as the specter had eaten one pear it went away."

Then said the king, "Conceal from every one what you have told me, and I will watch myself tonight."

As soon as it was dark the king came into the garden and brought a priest with him to address the ghost, and they both seated themselves under a tree with the gardener standing near them, and waited in silence. About midnight the maiden crept out from the bushes, and went to the pear tree, and the three watchers saw her eat a pear from the tree without plucking it, while an angel stood near in white garments.

Then the priest went toward her and said, "Have you come from heaven or from earth? Are you a spirit or a human being?"

Then the maiden answered, "Oh me! I am no ghost, only a poor creature forsaken by everyone but God."

Then said the king, "You may be forsaken by all the world, but if you will let me be your friend, I will never forsake you."

So the maiden was taken to the king's castle, and she was so beautiful and modest that the king learnt to love her with all his heart. He had silver hands made for her, and very soon after they were married with great pomp.

About a year after, the king had to go to battle, and he placed his

young wife under the care of his mother, who promised to be very kind to her, and to write to him.

Not long after this, the queen had a little son born, and the king's mother wrote a letter to him immediately, so that he might have the earliest news, and sent it by a messenger.

The messenger, however, after traveling a long way, became tired, and sat down to rest by a brook, where he soon fell fast asleep. Then came the wizard, who was always trying to injure the good queen, took away the letter from the sleeping messenger, and replaced it by another, in which it was stated that the little child was a changeling.

Knowing nothing of the change, the messenger carried this letter to the king, who when he read it was terribly distressed and troubled. However, he wrote in reply to say that the queen was to have every attention and care till his return.

The wicked wizard again watched for the messenger, and while he slept exchanged the king's kind letter for another, in which was written to the king's mother an order to kill both the queen and her child.

The old mother was quite terrified when she read this letter, for she could not believe the king meant her to do anything so dreadful. She wrote again to the king but there was no answer, for the wicked wizard always interrupted the messengers, and sent false letters. The last was worse than all, for it stated that instead of killing the mother and her child, they were to cut out the tongue of the changeling and put out the mother's eyes.

But the king's mother was too good to attend to these dreadful orders, so she said to the queen, while her eyes streamed with tears, "I cannot kill you both, as the king desires me to do, but I must not let you remain here any longer. Go out into the world with your child, and do not come back again." Then she bound the boy on his mother's back, and the poor woman departed, weeping as she went.

After walking some time, she reached a dense forest, and did not know which road to take. So she knelt down and prayed for help. As she rose from her knees she saw a light shining from the window of a little cottage, on which was hung a small signboard, with these words, "Every one who dwells here is safe." Out of the cottage stepped a maiden dressed in snowy garments, and said, "Welcome, queen-wife," and led her in. Then she unfastened the baby from his mother's back, and rocked him in her arms till he slept so peacefully that she laid him on a bed in another room, and came back to his mother.

The poor woman looked at her earnestly and said, "How did you know I was a queen?"

The white maiden replied, "I am a good fairy sent to take care of you and your child."

So she remained in that cottage many years, and was very happy. She was so pious and good that her hands grew again, and the little boy became her great comfort.

Not long after she had been sent away from the castle, the king returned, and immediately asked to see his wife and child.

Then his old mother began to weep, and said, "You wicked man, how can you ask me for your wife and child when you wrote me such dreadful letters, and told me to kill two such innocent beings?"

The king, in distress, asked her what she meant; and she showed him the letters she had received, which were changed by the dreadful wizard. Then the king began to weep so bitterly for his wife and child, that the old woman pitied him and said, "Do not be so unhappy; they still live, I could not kill them; but your wife and child have gone into the wide world, never to come back for fear of your anger."

Then said the king, "I will go to the ends of the earth to find them, and I will neither eat nor drink till I find my dear wife, even if I should die of hunger." Thereupon the king started on his expedition, traveling over rocks and valleys, over mountains and highways, for seven long years; but he found her not, and he thought she was starved to death, and that he should never see her again.

He neither ate nor drank during the whole time of earthly food, but heaven sent him help. At last he arrived at a large forest, and found the little cottage with the signboard, and the words upon it, "Every one who dwells here is safe."

While he stood reading the words the maiden in white raiment came out, took him by the hand, and led him into the cottage, saying, "My lord the king is welcome; but why is he here?"

Then he replied, "For seven years I have been traveling about the world hoping to find my wife and child, but I have not yet succeeded. Can you help me?"

"Sit down," said the angel, "and take something to eat and drink first."

The king was so tired that he gladly obeyed, for he really wanted rest. Then he laid himself down and slept, and the maiden covered his face.

Then she went into an inner chamber where the queen sat with her little son, whom she had named "Painbringer," and said to her, "Go out together into the other chamber; your husband has come."

The poor queen went out, but still sorrowfully, for she remembered the cruel letters his mother had received, and knew not that he still loved her.

Just as she entered the room the covering fell off his face, and she told her little son to replace it.

The boy went forward and laid the cloth gently over the face of the

strange man. But the king heard the voice in his slumber, and moved his head so that the covering again fell off.

"My child," said the queen, "cover the face of your father."

He looked at her in surprise, and said, "How can I cover my father's face, dear mother? I have no father in this world. You have taught me to pray to 'Our Father, which art in heaven'; and I thought my father was God. This strange man is not my father. I don't know him."

When the king heard this, he started up, and asked who they were.

Then said the queen, "I am your wife, and this is your son."

The king looked at her with surprise. "Your face and your voice are the same," he said, "but my wife had silver hands, and yours are natural."

"My hands have mercifully been allowed to grow again," she replied; and, as he still doubted, the maiden in white entered the room, carrying the silver hands, which she showed to the king.

Then he saw at once that this was, indeed, his dear lost wife, and his own little son; and he embraced them, full of joy.

The maiden prepared a dinner for them, which they all shared; and after a kind farewell, the king started with his wife and child to return home to the castle, where his mother and all the household received them with great rejoicing.

A second marriage feast was prepared, and the happiness of their latter days made amends for all they had suffered through the wicked demon.

THE THREE LANGUAGES

IN SWITZERLAND, some years ago, lived an old count. He had an only son, whose intellect was so inferior that he seemed unable to learn anything.

One day his father said to him, "My son, I have done everything I can for you, but your head can retain nothing, do what I will. I must send you away to an excellent master, who shall try what he can do with you."

So the youth left for a distant city, where he remained with the master a whole year. At the end of that time he returned home, and his father said to him, "Well, my son, what have you learned?"

"Father, I have learned to understand what the dog says when he barks," answered he.

"Heaven pity you!" cried the father; "is that all the knowledge you have gained? Then I must send you to another master."

So the youth was again placed under the care of a first-rate master for a year.

On his return, his father asked him the same question.

"Father," said the boy, "I can now understand the language of birds."

Then his father flew into another rage, and exclaimed, "Oh! you lost creature, has all this precious time been wasted in learning nothing, and are you not ashamed to appear in my presence? However, I will try you once more with a third master; and if you make no more progress than you have done during the last two years with him, I will give you up—you shall be no longer my son."

So the youth went for a year to a third master, and on his return, when his father asked him what he had learned, he replied, "Dear father, I have this time learned to understand the croaking of the frogs."

Then was the father in a greater rage than ever. He started up, called the household together, and said, "This youth is my son no longer; he shall not stay here. I order you to chase him from the house, and you are all at liberty to take his life!"

The servants drove him out, but they pitied him too much to kill him. So they let him go away unhurt; but they killed a stag, and sent the eyes and the tongue to the old count, to make him believe that his son had been killed, as he commanded.

The youth wandered away far from home in a very sad mood, and came at last to a roadside inn, and asked the landlord if he could give him a night's lodging.

"Willingly," replied the burgomaster, "if you do not mind taking up your abode for the night in the old tower; but I warn you that your life will be in danger, for the place is full of wild dogs, who bark, and howl, and constantly seize and devour human beings. The whole neighborhood is kept in fear and terror about these dogs, and no one can do anything to get rid of them."

But the young man had no fear, and he said, "Let me go to these barking and howling dogs, only give me something to throw to them, and I'll warrant they won't injure me."

As he would not sleep in the tower unless they agreed to his wishes, they gave him some meat for the wild animals, and then led him to the tower and left him.

As he entered, not one of the dogs barked at him, but wagged their tails in the most friendly manner, ate what he had brought for them, and did not ruffle even a hair of his head.

On the following morning the youth made his appearance, and stood

before every one safe and sound, and said to the burgomaster, "I understand the language of dogs, and they have explained to me clearly why they have caused so much trouble in the land. They are kept in the tower by enchantment, to watch and protect a great treasure which is hidden beneath it; and until that treasure is removed, there will be no rest for themselves or others, and the spell will remain unbroken. This I have discovered from their conversation."

All who heard this news were overjoyed at the discovery; and the burgomaster said that if the young man should be successful in bringing away the treasure, he would adopt him as his son, for he had no children of his own.

Then the youth went up again to the tower, and having understood well from the conversation of the dogs where to find the treasure, he knew what to do, and very soon returned to the burgomaster's house, carrying a chest full of gold.

The spell was broken; the howling and barking of the wild dogs ceased from that hour, and the land was freed from the dreadful plague.

A short time after this, the young man thought he should like to take a journey to Rome. On the way he came to a marsh, in which a number of frogs were croaking loudly. He stopped to listen, and as he understood their language, what he heard them say made him quite thoughtful and sad as he continued his journey. He arrived at Rome just in time to hear of the Pope's death, and the great doubts which had arisen as to which of the cardinals should be chosen as his successor.

At last it was decided that whoever received a sign from heaven, should be at once elected as Pope.

Scarcely had this decision been arrived at, when the young count entered the church; and no sooner did he appear than two snow-white doves flew towards him, and placed themselves one on each shoulder, and there remained.

The clergy who were present acknowledged at once that this was a sign from heaven, and asked the young count if he would accept the position of Pope.

At first he hesitated to reply, for he could scarcely believe he was suitable for such a high station; but the doves, whose language he understood, whispered that it was right to do as the people wished, so at last he said "Yes."

Then he was anointed and consecrated, and so was fulfilled the prophecy which he had heard in the frogs' croak, and which had made him so unhappy, namely, that before a month had passed he would be a priest.

Of course, after this, he had to be present at high mass, and sing the parts, although he could not read a word of the Latin. However, the

two doves who again perched themselves on his shoulders, whispered the words into his ears; and so, after all, his acquaintance with the languages of dogs, frogs, and birds was of as much use to him as if he had been a man of great learning.

THE CLEVER ELSIE

THERE WAS once a man and woman who had an only daughter, and they thought her so wonderfully clever that they gave her the name of "the clever Elsie." One day her father said to his wife, "Our daughter is now grown up and we must get her married soon."

"Yes," replied the mother, "if we find any one who will have her."

Not long after this a young man named Hans came to ask these good people for their daughter, yet he made one decided condition, that if he did not find her as clever as they said, he could not marry her.

"Oh," exclaimed the father, "she has a good headpiece, you may be sure of that."

"Yes," said the mother, "and she can even see the wind running through the streets and hear the footsteps of the flies on the ceiling."

But they did not tell him how much she disliked trouble or work, and how often she was idle—however, they sat down to supper together, and seemed very happy. Presently her mother said, "Elsie, go into the cellar, and draw some beer."

The clever Elsie took the jug from the nail and went into the cellar, taking off the lid as she walked to save time. When she reached the cellar she fetched a chair and placed it in front of the cask that she might not have to stoop and hurt her back. Then she stood the jug upon it under the tap, from which the beer ran slowly, and waited impatiently for it to fill.

But her eyes were not idle, and while looking round the cellar, she observed upon the wall above her a crossbar which the mason had by an oversight forgotten to remove.

Then the clever Elsie began to weep and to say that she was quite sure if she married Hans that one of them would be killed by a crossbar, and there she sat, weeping and wailing over this superstitious fear till her strength was almost gone. Those above at supper waited for the beer but none came, and at last they sent for the maiden and said to her—"Go and see why Elsie is staying so long."

Then went the maiden and found her sitting before the cask, weeping bitterly.

"Elsie," she said, "why do you weep?"

"Ah," she replied, "shall I not weep when I can foresee that a crossbar will cause my death if I marry Hans?" and she pointed to the wall as she spoke.

"What a clever Elsie you must be to find this out," said the maid-servant, beginning to weep and mourn over this misfortune.

The maiden remained so long in the cellar that her master sent the boy after her. He also began to cry and mourn when he heard what the clever Elsie had found out. At last the father and mother came themselves, and on hearing the clever Elsie's story they both joined in the crying and howling, and the noise became so loud that Hans went himself to discover what was the matter.

When he reached the cellar and heard them all screaming and crying one louder than the other, as if they were trying who could weep the loudest, he exclaimed, "What dreadful misfortune has happened?"

"Oh, dear Hans," said the Elsie, "look at that crossbar, I have a presentiment that if we are married you will be killed by it, for if it remains here, it may fall on your head when you come to draw the beer; no wonder we all weep."

"Now," said Hans, whose self-love was gratified, "I believe that you are a clever Elsie to weep and make every body else weep on my account, and I want nothing else to make my household complete but a clever wife."

So he took her by the hand and led her away from the cellar to the supper table, the evening passed pleasantly, and very soon after the marriage took place.

But the clever Elsie did not like work. After they had spent a few weeks in idleness, Hans said one day. "Dear wife, I must go to work and earn money for a living, don't you think you could go into our little cornfield and cut down the corn that we may have some flour to make bread?"

"Yes, my dear Hans," she replied, "I will if you wish it."

So the next morning Hans went off to his daily work. As soon as he was gone, his wife made some nice broth for herself and took it with her into the field; but when she arrived there she sat down and said to herself, "What shall I do, shall I nap first, or eat first? Ah, I will eat first."

So she ate up the whole pot full of broth, and then feeling heavy and stuffed with what she had eaten, she asked herself, "Now, shall I cut the corn or sleep first? Ah, I know, I will have a nap before I begin my work."

Then she laid herself down in the corn and was soon fast asleep. Hans returned home expecting his dinner, but no one was there, nor anything ready. He waited a long time, but the Elsie did not come.

"What a clever Elsie she is to be sure," he said; "so industrious that she cannot even come home to her dinner."

But as the evening came on, and she still remained away, Hans went out to look for her, and to see how much corn she had cut. On reaching the field he found that none had been touched, and after searching some time for his clever Elsie, he found her fast asleep amongst the corn.

Hans went away in great haste and fetched a fowler's net covered with little bells which he spread over her, but she continued to sleep as soundly as before. Then he returned home, locked the cottage door, and seated himself to work on a chair as coolly as if no clever Elsie had ever been his wife.

At last when the clever Elsie awoke out of her long sleep and found it quite dark, she recollected where she was, and rose to go home, while the bells which hung round her tinkled at every step she took. This alarmed her so much that she began to feel puzzled and could scarcely tell whether she really was the clever Elsie or not.

"Oh dear," she said, "am I myself, or am I someone else?"

She was scarcely able to answer this question, and stood a long time as if in doubt; at last a thought struck her: "I will go home and ask Hans whether I am really myself or someone else, he is sure to know."

She found her way home, although it was dark, very quickly, the bells tinkling as she ran; but when she reached the front door of the house it was locked. She knocked at the window and cried:

"Hans, is the Elsie at home?"

"Yes," he answered, "she is at home." Oh, how frightened she felt as she heard this.

"Oh, dear," she exclaimed; "then I am not the clever Elsie after all."

Then she went from door to door of the neighbor's houses, but when they heard the bells jingling no one would admit her, and even the neighbors did not recognize her. At last she ran away from the village and has not been heard of since. So after all it is better to be industrious than clever.

THE TROUBLESOME VISITORS

A COCK AND HEN determined one day to go for a little trip into the country, to visit their old master, Dr. Korbes; so they built a very pretty carriage, which had four red wheels, and harnessed to it four mice. Then they seated themselves in it and drove away together.

They had not traveled far when they met a cat, who said to them, "Where are you going?"

The hen replied, "We are going to see Dr. Korbes, our old master."

"Take me with you," said the cat.

"With all my heart," she replied; "but you must get up behind, for if you sit in front you will fall:

*"Eight of us can ride
Outside and inside.
Little red wheels roll,
Little white mice pull
Till we reach Dr. Korbes' house."*

Then there came by a millstone, then an egg, after that a duck, and a darning needle, and at last a pin, who were allowed seats in the carriage, and they all drove away together. When they arrived at Dr. Korbes' house, he was not at home, but they made themselves quite comfortable. The mice drew the little carriage into the barn. The cock and hen flew to a perch, the cat seated herself in the fireplace, the duck waddled to the spring, while the egg rolled itself up in the towel. The darning needle stuck point upwards in the chair cushion, and the pin, jumping on the bed, fixed itself in the pillow, while the millstone placed itself over the entrance door.

Dr. Korbes came home in a short time after this, and as his servant was out, he went into the kitchen to light the fire; but while attempting to do this, the cat threw a quantity of ashes into his face. He ran quickly to the spring to wash them, and the duck, who was swimming about, splashed so much water over him that he was obliged to run into the house for his towel. But as he took it up, the egg rolled over his face, broke, and filling his eyes, stuck them together like glue. After this he wished to rest, but as he seated himself in his armchair the darning needle ran into him. Up he jumped in a rage, and threw himself on his bed, but this was quite as bad, for no sooner did he lay his head on the pillow, than the pin scratched his face. At this last attack he cried out in great trouble, and declared that the things must all have been bewitched, and that he would run away. But as he opened the front door to go out, down fell the millstone on his head and killed him. This Dr. Korbes must really have been a very wicked, or a very injured, man.

THE WONDERFUL GLASS

A MAN once had so many children that all his friends had been asked to become sponsors, so when another child was born he had no one to ask, and knew not what to do.

One night when he had laid himself down to sleep in great trouble, he had a wonderful dream. He dreamed that a voice said to him, "Go out early tomorrow morning, and the first person you meet, ask him to be godfather." On awaking, he determined to follow the advice given in his dream, and dressing himself quickly he went out. Near his door he met a man, and immediately asked him to be sponsor for his child.

The stranger, before giving his consent, presented the man with a glass, and said, "This is a most wonderful glass. The water with which you fill it has the power of curing sick persons; you have only to observe where death stands. If he stands by the head of the sick person then give him the water, and he will be soon well; but if he stands by the feet all your trouble will be useless, the sick person must die."

So the stranger became sponsor for his child, and gave to the father the wonderful goblet, which endowed the water he put into it with such healing qualities. Besides this, he could always tell whether the sick person would recover or not, and could therefore speak confidently about curing him; by this he made a great deal of money, and his fame spread far and wide. Even the king sent for him, when one of his children was ill; but as the wonderful doctor entered, he saw death standing at the head of the bed, and knew that the child would recover after drinking the water in the magic glass; and so he did. The second time he was sent for the same occurred; but on his third visit the doctor saw death seated at the foot of the bed, and he told the parents that the child must die. After a while this doctor became curious, and thought he should like to see where his child's godfather, who had given him such a valuable present, lived, and tell him how he was getting on. But when he reached the house the household quite startled him. On the first step a mop and a broom were quarreling together and fighting furiously. "Where shall I find the master of this house?" he asked.

"A step higher," answered the broom.

But when he arrived on the second step, he saw a number of dead fingers lying together, and he enquired again, "Where is the master?"

"A step higher," replied one of the fingers.

On the third step lay a heap of human heads, who directed him to go a step higher. On the fourth step he saw a fish frizzling in the pan, and cooking himself. He spoke to the man and told him to go a step

higher. On he went, and at last, on the fifth step he came upon the door of a room, and peeping through the keyhole, saw the godfather, and to his surprise, he had large horns; but as soon as he opened the door and went in, the strange man with the horns rushed away suddenly, laid himself on the bed, and drew the clothes over him. Then said the man, "What is the meaning of this strange household, good sir? On the steps I met with all sorts of strange things, and was told to go up higher; and when I came to the door of this room, I peeped through the keyhole and saw you with a pair of horns on your head."

"That is not true," cried the pretended godfather, in such a terrible voice that the man, in a fright, turned to run away; but no one knows what has become of him, for he has never been heard of since.

OLD SULTAN AND HIS FRIENDS

A COUNTRYMAN once had a faithful hound, who was called Sultan, and who had grown old in his service. He had lost all his teeth, and could no longer follow with the pack.

One day the countryman stood before the door with his wife and said to her, "Old Sultan is no longer of any use. I shall shoot him tomorrow."

But Sultan's mistress, who had great pity for the faithful animal, exclaimed, "How can you destroy him, after he has served us so many years, and lived with us so long? I am sure we could spare him some allowance for his old age."

"No, no," replied her husband. "That is not clever reasoning. He has not a tooth in his head, and is of no farther use in keeping away the thieves; they are not afraid of him, so he may as well go. If he has served us well, so has he also been well fed, and could eat as much as he wanted."

The poor dog, who was lying stretched out in the sun, not very far off, heard all that was said, and it made him very sad to know that the morrow would be the last day of his life.

Now Sultan had a very good friend, a wolf, who lived near; so in the evening he slipped out into the forest to visit him, and complained to him of the fate which awaited him.

"Listen, grandfather," said the wolf; "take courage. I will help you out of your trouble. I have thought of something. Tomorrow morning early your master and his wife are going out into the fields to make hay, and they will take their little child with them. While they are at work, they will lay the child under the hedge in the shadow. You lay

yourself by him, as if you meant to watch him. I will wait till all is quiet, and then I will run out of the wood, seize the child, and carry it away. Then you must spring after me with the greatest zeal, as you used to do in your hunting days. I will let the child fall, and you shall bring it back to its parents again, and they will believe that you have saved it from me, and will be the more thankful because they intended to kill you. Instead of that, you will be in full favor, and nothing will ever cause them to give you up."

The dog followed this advice, and, as it had been planned, so was accomplished. The father screamed as he saw the wolf run away with his child through the wood; but when poor old Sultan brought it back, his joy and gratitude knew no bounds. He stroked and patted the old dog, saying, "Nothing shall ever hurt you now, you dear old dog, and you shall never want for food and shelter as long as you live."

To his wife he said, "Go home at once, wife, and cook some bread and milk for poor old Sultan. It is soft, and will not require strong teeth to bite it. And bring the pillow from my armchair. He shall have it for a bed."

And so from this time old Sultan had every comfort and contentment that his heart could wish. By and by Sultan went to pay the wolf a visit, and told him joyfully of his good fortune.

"Grandfather," he said, slyly, "I suppose now you will shut your eyes, and not see if I carry away a fat sheep from your master's flock. It is very hard to get food nowadays."

"I can't help that," said the dog. "My master trusts in me, and I dare not allow you to touch his property."

The wolf, however, did not believe the dog spoke in earnest, so he came in the night, slipped into the fold, and would have carried off a sheep, if Sultan had not forewarned his master of the wolf's intention.

He watched for him, and gave him a good combing with the flail, till he was almost bare of hair.

So he was obliged to rush away, crying out, however, to the dog, "Only wait a little, you false friend. You shall pay for this."

The next morning the wolf sent a challenge to the dog by his friend the wild boar, who had promised to stand second. They appointed to meet in the wood; and poor old Sultan had no one to stand by him but a cat who had only three legs. Puss had, however, plenty of spirit; although she hobbled along on her three legs with great pain, yet her tail stood erect, as if she cared for no one in the world. The wolf and the wild boar were already on the appointed spot; but when they saw their adversaries approaching, they thought that the cat's tail was a saber; and that each time puss humped her back as she hopped, it must be a

large stone which Sultan intended to throw at them. They were both so frightened that the wild boar crept in among the dried leaves, and the wolf sprang up a tree.

The dog and the cat were very much surprised when they reached the place to find no one there; but the cat espied something on the ground which she took for a mouse.

Now the wild boar, when he crept among the dried leaves to hide himself, left his gray ears sticking out; and when the cat began to smell about, she saw the ears move, and taking one of them for a mouse, sprang forward, caught the ear in her teeth, and bit it in half. The wild boar started up with a terrible scream, exclaiming, "There is the real offender up in the tree," and ran away as fast as he could. The dog and the cat looked up, and saw the wolf, who was so ashamed of his cowardice, and so angry with his pretended friend who had betrayed him, that he came down from the tree, and made friends with the cat and the dog from that moment.

THE BOASTING WOLF

A FOX WAS once speaking to a wolf of the great strength of human beings, especially men. "No animal can stand against them," he said, "unless he employs craft and cunning."

"Then," said the wolf, "I only wish I could see a man. I know he should not escape me; I would never let him go free."

"I can help you to obtain your wish," said the fox. "If you come to me early tomorrow morning, I will show you a man."

The wolf took care to be early enough, and the fox led him to a hedge through which he could see the road, and where the fox knew huntsmen would pass during the day.

First there came an old pensioner.

"Is that a man?" asked the wolf.

"No," answered the fox; "not now: he was once."

Then a little child passed, who was going to school.

"Is that a man?" he asked, again.

"No, not yet," said the fox, "but he will be one by and by."

At last a hunter appeared, with his double-barreled gun on his shoulder, and his hunting knife by his side.

"There!" cried the fox, "see, there comes a man at last. I will leave him to you to manage, but I shall run back to my hole."

The wolf rushed out upon the man at once, but the hunter was ready for him, although when he saw him he said to himself, "What a pity my gun is not loaded with buckshot."

However, he fired small shot into the animal's face as he sprung at him; but neither the pain nor the noise seemed to frighten the wolf in the least. The hunter fired again; still the wolf, struggling against the pain, made another jump—this time, furiously—but the hunter, hastily drawing his hunting knife, gave him two or three such powerful stabs, that he ran back to the fox all covered with blood.

"Well, brother wolf, and have you succeeded in conquering a man?"

"Oh," he cried, "I had not the least idea of a man's strength; first he took a stick from his shoulder, and blew something in my face, which tingled dreadfully; and before I could get closer to him, he puffed again through his stick, and there came a flash of lightning, and something struck my nose like hailstones. I would not give in, but rushed again upon him. In a moment he pulled a white rib out of his body, and gave me such dreadful cuts with it that I believe I must lie here and die."

"See, now," said the fox, "how foolish it is to boast. You have thrown your axe so far that you cannot fetch it back."

THE FOX AND THE CAT

ONE DAY a cat met a fox in the wood. "Ah," she thought, "he is clever, and sensible, and talked of in the world a good deal; I will speak to him." So she said, quite in a friendly manner, "Good morning, dear Mr. Fox; how are you? and how do affairs go with you in these expensive times?"

The fox, full of pride, looked at the cat from head to foot, and knew hardly what to say to her for a long time. At last he said, "Oh, you poor little whisker-cleaner, you old gray tabby, you hungry mouse-hunter, what are you thinking about to come to me, and to stand there and ask me how I am going on? What have you learned, and how many tricks do you know?"

"I only know one trick," answered the cat meekly.

"And, pray, what is that?" he asked.

"Well," she said, "if the hounds are behind me, I can spring up into a tree out of their way, and save myself."

"Is that all?" cried the fox; "why, I am master of a hundred

tricks, and have, over and above all, a sack full of cunning; but I pity you, puss, so come with me, and I will teach you how to baffle both men and hounds."

At this moment a hunter with four hounds was seen approaching. The cat sprang nimbly up a tree, and seated herself on the highest branch, where, by the spreading foliage, she was quite concealed.

"Turn out the sack, Mr. Fox; turn out the sack!" cried the cat; but the hounds had already seized him, and held him fast.

"Ah, Mr. Fox," cried the cat, "your hundred tricks are not of much use to you; now, if you had only known one like mine, you would not have so quickly lost your life."

BROTHER FROLICK'S ADVENTURES

THE KING of a certain country had been for some time at war, which at last came to an end, and several soldiers were discharged. Among them was a man called Brother Frolick, because he was such a lighthearted, jolly fellow; and although he only received a small loaf and four kreutzers in gold, he started on a journey through the world with a merry heart.

He had not gone far, when he saw a poor beggar sitting by the roadside begging, but he did not know that it was a saint in disguise. The beggar asked for alms, and Brother Frolick said: "What shall I give you? I am only a poor, discharged soldier, and all they have given me is a loaf of bread and four kreutzers, and when it is all gone, I must beg as well as you. However, I will give you something." Then he divided the loaf into four pieces, and gave one to the beggar, as well as one of his gold pieces.

The beggar thanked him, and went away, but only to a little distance; for, again changing his appearance and face, he seated himself by the highway, waited for Brother Frolick to pass, and again begged for alms. The good-natured soldier gave this beggar also a fourth of his bread and a gold piece.

The saint thanked him, and, after walking some distance, a third time seated himself in another form to beg of Brother Frolick. This time, also, he gave him a third piece of the divided loaf and another kreutzer. The beggar thanked him and went away.

The kindhearted fellow had now only a fourth part of the loaf and one gold piece left, so he went to an inn, ate the bread, and paid

his kreutzer for a jug of beer. As soon as he had finished, he went out, and traveled on for some distance, and there again was the saint in the form of a discharged soldier like himself.

"Good evening, comrade," he said; "could you give me a piece of bread, and a kreutzer to buy something to drink?"

"Where am I to get it?" answered Brother Frolick. "I had my discharge today, and they gave me a loaf of bread and four gold kreutzers. But I met three beggars on the high road, and I gave them each a fourth part of my bread and a kreutzer, and the last kreutzer I have just paid for something to drink with my last piece of bread. Now I am empty, and, if you also have nothing, we can go and beg together."

"No," answered the saint, "we need not do that; I understand a little of medicine and surgery, and can soon earn as much as I shall want."

"Well," replied Brother Frolick, "I don't understand doctoring at all, so I must go and beg alone."

"No; come with me," cried the other; "whatever I earn, you shall have half."

"That is good news for me," said Brother Frolick, so they went away together.

After a time, as they passed a peasant's house, they heard great cries and lamentations, so they went in, and found the husband very ill and at the point of death, and the wife weeping and howling with all her might.

"Leave off that noise," said the saint; "I will soon cure your husband." Then he took some salve out of his pocket, and healed the man so quickly that he could stand up and was quite well.

The husband and wife joyfully thanked the stranger, and said, "What can we give you in return for this kindness?"

But the saint would name nothing, and, worse still, refused all they brought to him; and although Brother Frolick nudged him more than once, he still said, "No; I will take nothing—we do not want it."

At last the grateful people brought a lamb, and said that he must take it whether he would or not. Then Brother Frolick nudged him in the side, and said: "Take it, stupid; you know we do want it."

Then the saint said at last, "Well, I will take the lamb, but I cannot carry it; you must do that, if you want it so much."

"Oh, that will be no trouble to me," cried the other, and taking it on his shoulder they went away together. After a while, they came to a wood, and Brother Frolick, who began to feel tired and hungry, for the lamb was heavy, proposed that they should stop and rest. "See," he said, "this is a beautiful place for us to cook the lamb and eat it."

"It's all the same to me," replied the saint, "but I can have nothing

to do with the cooking; you must do that, if you have a kettle, and I will go away for a little while till it is ready. You must not, however, eat any till I come back; I will be here quite in time."

"Go along," said Brother Frolick, "I understand how to cook, and I will soon have dinner ready."

Then the saint went away, and Brother Frolick slaughtered the lamb, lighted a fire, and threw some of the flesh into the kettle to boil. The meat was quite ready, however, before the saint returned, and Brother Frolick became so impatient, that he took out of the kettle a part of the flesh, in which was the heart. "The heart is the best of all," he said, tasting it, and finding it very good he ate it all.

At last his comrade returned and said: "You may eat all the lamb yourself, I only want the heart, so just give it me."

Then Brother Frolick took a knife and fork and began searching amongst the pieces of meat for the heart, which, of course, he could not find. Then he said pertly, "It is not there."

"Then where can it be?" said the saint.

"I do not know," said Brother Frolick; "but see," he added, "why, what a couple of fools we are, searching for a lamb's heart; of course there is not one to be found, for a lamb has no heart."

"Ah," said the other, "that is news; every animal has a heart, why should not a lamb?"

"No, certainly, brother," he said, "a lamb has no heart; reflect a little, and you will be convinced that it really has none."

"Well, certainly, it is quite clear that there is no heart to be found in this one, and as I do not want any other part, you may eat it all yourself."

"I cannot eat it all," replied Brother Frolick, "so what is left I will put into my knapsack."

When this was done, the two started to continue their journey, and Brother Peter, as the saint called himself, caused a large quantity of water to rise on the road just across where they had to pass. Said Brother Peter, "You go first."

"No," answered the other, "I would rather see you across," for he thought, "if the water is very deep, I won't go at all."

So Brother Peter stepped over, and the water only came up to his knees. His comrade prepared to follow, but he had not gone far when the water came up to his neck. "Brother, help me," he cried.

"Will you confess, then, that you ate the lamb's heart?" he replied.

"No," he said, "I did not eat it."

Immediately the water became deeper, and flowed to his mouth. "Help! help me, brother," he cried.

"Will you confess now that you have eaten the lamb's heart?" cried Brother Peter.

"No," he replied, "I did not eat it."

Now the saint did not intend to drown him, so he allowed the water to subside, and Brother Frolick crossed over safely. They traveled after this till they reached a foreign land, and in the chief city heard that the king's daughter was very ill, and not expected to live.

"Holloa! brother," said the soldier, "that is a good chance for us; if you cure her, we shall never know want again."

But Brother Peter did not hurry himself, and when his comrade begged him to put his best foot foremost, he went slower than ever. Brother Frolick pushed him and dragged him on, but all to no purpose, and at last they heard that the king's daughter was dead. "There now," cried Brother Frolick, "we have lost our chance, all through your sleepy walking."

"Be quiet, now," said Brother Peter; "I can not only cure the sick, but I can restore the dead to life."

"If that is the case," replied his comrade, "you may be sure that the king will be ready to give us the half of his kingdom for joy."

They therefore went to the king's castle, and found them all in great grief. But Brother Peter said to the king: "Do not mourn, I can restore the princess to life."

He and his comrade were at once led to her room, and telling everyone to go out, they were left alone with the dead princess. Brother Peter immediately stripped the body of the grave-clothes, and laid it in a bath of very hot water, which he had ordered to be brought. Then he uttered a few strange words, which his comrade tried to remember, and turning to the princess, said: "I command thee to come out of the bath, and stand on thy feet."

Immediately the princess rose, and was again alive and well. The chamber-women were sent for, and the princess in her royal clothes was taken to her father, who received her with great joy, and said to the two strangers: "Name your reward; it shall be yours, even to the half of my kingdom."

But Brother Peter replied: "No, I will take no reward for what I have done."

"Oh, you foolish fellow," thought Brother Frolick to himself. Then he nudged him again in the side: "How can you be so stupid? If you don't want anything, I do."

Brother Peter, however, still refused, but the king, seeing that his comrade was quite willing to accept something, told his treasurer to fill the soldier's knapsack with gold.

They left the city after this, and traveled on till they came to a wood. Then said Brother Peter: "We may as well divide that gold."

"With all my heart," replied the good-natured fellow.

Peter took the gold, and divided it into three portions.

"What is that for?" asked Brother Frolick. "What have you got in your head now? There are only two of us."

"Oh," he replied, "it is all right. One third is for myself, one third for you, and one third for him who ate the lamb's heart."

"Oh, I ate that," cried Brother Frolick, gathering the money up quickly. "I did indeed; can't you believe me?"

"How can it be true?" replied Peter; "a lamb has no heart."

"Nonsense, brother," he said, "what are you thinking of? A lamb has a heart as well as other animals. Why should he not have one?"

"Now really this is too good," replied Brother Peter. "However, you may keep all the gold to yourself, but I will go on my way alone in future."

"As you please, brother," answered the soldier. "Farewell."

Then Peter started on another road, and left Brother Frolick to go off by himself. "It is just as well," thought he, "but still he is a most wonderful man." The soldier had now quite as much money as he wanted, but he knew not how to spend it properly; he wasted it or gave it away, till as time went on he was again almost penniless. At last he arrived at a city where he heard that the king's daughter had just died. "Hello," thought he, "here is an opportunity: I know how to restore her to life, and they will pay me something worth having this time." So he went to the king and told him that he could restore his daughter to life.

Now the king had heard of the discharged soldier who had lately given new life to a princess, and he thought Brother Frolick was the man, still as he was not quite sure, he asked him first for his opinion, and whether he would venture if the princess was really dead.

The soldier had no fear, so he ordered the bath to be filled with hot water, and went into the room with the dead princess alone. Then he stripped her of her clothes, placed her in the bath, and said, as he supposed, the words which Brother Peter had said, but the dead body did not move, although he repeated the words three times. He now began to feel alarmed, and cried out in angry tones: "Stand up, will you, or you will get what you don't expect."

At this moment the saint appeared in his former shape as a discharged soldier, and entered the room through the window.

"You foolish man," he cried, "how can you raise the dead to life? I will help you this time, but don't attempt it again."

Thereupon he pronounced the magic words, and immediately the princess rose and stood on her feet, and was as well and strong as ever. Then the saint went away through the window, the maids were sent for to dress the princess in her royal robes, and then the soldier led her to her father. He knew, however, that he was not free to ask for a reward, for Peter had forbidden him to take anything, and therefore when the king asked him what he would have, he said he would take nothing, although he wanted it so much through extravagance and folly. Yet the king ordered his knapsack to be filled with gold, and with many thanks he took his departure.

Outside near the castle gate he met the saint, who said to him: "See now, I forbade you to take anything, and yet you have received a knapsack full of gold."

"What could I do," he replied, "when they would put it in for me?"

"Then I can only tell you," was the reply, "that if you get into trouble a second time by undertaking what you cannot perform, it will be worse for you."

"All right, brother; I don't care, now I have the gold, and I shall not care about putting dead people into a bath again after this."

"Ah," said the saint, "your gold will not last long. However, if you do not after this go into unlawful paths, I will give to your knapsack the power of containing in itself whatever you may wish for. And now farewell, you will see me no more."

"Good-bye," said the soldier, as he turned away. "Well," he thought, "I am glad that he is gone; he is a wonderful fellow, no doubt, but I am better without him for a companion."

Of the wonderful power with which he had endowed his knapsack Brother Frolick never thought then.

He went on his way with his gold from place to place, and spent and wasted it as he did before, and at last he had nothing left but four kreutzers. With this sum he entered an inn by the roadside, and felt that the money must go, so he spent three kreutzers in wine, and one in bread.

As he sat eating his bread and drinking his wine, the fragrant smell of roast goose reached his nose. Brother Frolick looked round and peeped about, and at last saw that the landlady had two geese roasting in the oven.

Then he suddenly remembered what his old comrade had said, that whatever he wished for he would find in his knapsack. "Aha," he said to himself, "then I must wish for the geese to be there." Then he went out, and before the door he said, "I wish that the two geese roasting in the oven were in my knapsack." When he had said this he took it off, peeped in, and there they both lay. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "this is all

right; I am a mighty fellow after all," and going farther into a meadow, sat down to enjoy his good fare.

Just as he had finished eating one goose, two farmhands came by, and when they saw the remaining goose, they stood still and looked at it with hungry eyes. "Well," thought Brother Frolick, "one is enough for me." So he beckoned the workers nearer, and said, "Here, take this goose, and drink my health as you eat it."

They thanked him and went away quickly to the inn, bought some wine and bread, and then unpacked the goose which had been given them, and began to eat it.

The landlady, when she saw it, went to her husband, and said, "Those two are eating goose, just see if one of ours is gone from the oven."

The landlord ran to look, and found the oven empty. "You thieves!" he exclaimed, running out to them, "where did you get roast goose to eat? Tell me instantly, or I will give you a taste of green hazel juice!"

"We are not thieves," they cried; "a discharged soldier gave us this goose yonder in the meadow."

"You are not going to make me believe that," cried the landlord; "that soldier has been here, and a most respectable fellow he is; I watched him when he left the house and he had nothing with him then. No; you are the thieves, and shall pay for the goose." But as they could not pay for it, he took a stick and thrashed them out of the house.

Quite ignorant of all this, Brother Frolick went on his way, till he came to a place where stood a beautiful castle, and not far from it, a large but mean-looking inn. The soldier went up to the inn and asked for a night's lodging. But the landlord said, "There is no room here; the house is full of noble guests."

"I wonder at that," said Brother Frolick, "why should they come here instead of going to that beautiful castle yonder?"

"Ah, yes," said the landlord, "many have thought as you do; they have gone to spend a night at the castle, but they have never returned alive. None are allowed to remain," said the landlord, "who do not go in on their heads."

"I am not likely to walk in on my head," said the soldier; "but now, landlord, let me take something with me to eat and drink, and I'll go."

So the landlord brought him a good supper to take with him, and then Brother Frolick set out to go to the castle. On arriving, he first sat down and ate with great relish, and when he began to feel sleepy, laid himself on the ground, for there was no bed, and was soon asleep.

In the night, however, he was wakened by a terrible noise, and when he roused himself he saw nine hideous imps in the room, dancing round a pole, which they held in their hands. "Dance away," he cried,

"as long as you will, but don't come near me." The imps, however, disregarded his orders; nearer and nearer they approached as they danced, till one of them trod on his face, with his heavy foot. "Keep away, you wretches," he cried, but still they came nearer. Then Brother Frolick grew angry, he started up, seized a chair, and struck out right and left. But nine imps against one soldier is rather too much, and if he struck one before him, another behind would pull his hair most unmercifully. "You demons," he cried suddenly, "I'll take care of you; wait a bit—now then, all nine of you into my knapsack." Whisk! and they were all in; quick as lightning he fastened the bag and threw it into a corner.

Then all was quiet, and Brother Frolick laid himself down again and slept till broad daylight, when the arrival of the landlord of the inn and the nobleman, to whom the castle belonged, woke him. They were astonished to find him alive and full of spirits, and said to him, "Have you not seen any ghosts during the night, and did they not try to hurt you?"

"Well, not very much," answered Brother Frolick. "I have them all nine quite safe in my knapsack there," and he pointed to the corner. "You can dwell in your castle in peace now," he said to the nobleman. "They will never trouble you again."

The nobleman thanked the soldier and loaded him with presents; he also begged him to remain in his service, and promised to take care of him for the remainder of his life.

But the soldier said, "No; I have a roving disposition; I could never rest in one place. I will go and travel farther."

Then Brother Frolick went to a smith's, and laying the knapsack containing the imps on the anvil, asked the smith and his man to strike it with their great hammers, with all their strength. The imps set up a loud screech, and when at last all was quiet, the knapsack was opened. Eight of them were found quite dead, but the ninth, who had laid himself in a fold, was still living. He slipped out when the knapsack was opened and escaped.

THE FOX AND THE GEESE

A FOX CAME ONCE to a meadow, where a herd of fine fat geese were enjoying themselves. "Ah," he said, laughing, "I am just in time. They are so close together that I can come and fetch them one after another easily."

The geese, when they saw him, began to cackle with fear, sprung up, and, with much complaining and murmuring, begged for their lives.

The fox, however, would not listen, and said, "There is no hope of mercy—you must die."

At last one of them took heart, and said: "It would be very hard for us poor geese to lose our young, fresh lives so suddenly as this; but if you will grant us only one favor, afterwards we will place ourselves in a row, so that you may choose the fattest and best."

"And what is this favor?" asked the fox.

"Why, that we may have one hour to pray in before we die."

"Well, that is only fair," replied the fox; "it is a harmless request. Pray away, then, and I will wait for you."

Immediately they placed themselves in a row, and began to pray after their own fashion, which, however, was a most deafening and alarming cackle. In fact they were praying for their lives, and so efficaciously that they were heard at the farm, and long before the hour had ended, the master and his servants appeared in the field to discover what was the matter, and the fox, in a terrible fright, quickly made his escape, not, however, without being seen.

"We must hunt that fox tomorrow," said the master, as they drove the geese home to sale quarters. And so the cunning fox was outwitted by a goose.

THE FAIRIES' TWO GIFTS

IN OLDEN TIMES, when fairies lived on earth in the forms of human beings, a good fairy, once wandering for some distance, became tired, and night came on before she could find shelter. At last she saw before her two houses just opposite each other—one large and beautiful, which belonged to a rich man; the other, small and mean in appearance, was owned by a poor peasant.

The fairy thought, "I shall not be much trouble to the rich man, if he gives me shelter." So she went up to the door of the beautiful house, and knocked. At the sound, the rich man opened a window, and asked the stranger what she wanted. "I beg you to give me a night's lodging," she replied.

Then the owner of the beautiful house looked at the wanderer from head to foot, and he saw that she was dressed in mean and ragged clothes, but he could not see how much gold she had in her pocket. So

he shook his head, and said, "I cannot take you in; my rooms are full of valuable things, and if I were to admit into my house every one who knocks at my door, I should soon have to take the beggar's staff myself. You must seek for what you want elsewhere." Then he shut down the window, and left the good fairy standing outside.

She turned her back upon the grand house and went across to the other. Scarcely had she knocked when the poor man came and opened the door, and begged the wanderer to enter. "You must remain all night with us," he said: "It is already quite dark, and you cannot attempt to go farther."

The fairy was so pleased with this reception that she stepped in, and the wife of the poor man came forward to welcome her, and led her in and told her to make herself quite comfortable. "We have not much," she said, "but what there is, we will give you with all our hearts."

She placed the potatoes on the fire, and while they were cooking, milked the goat, that the visitor might have a little milk. As soon as the cloth was laid, the fairy seated herself at the table and ate with them, and the poor fare tasted good, because it was partaken amid contentment and peace.

After they had finished, and bedtime came, the wife called her husband away privately and said: "Dear husband, let us for tonight make up a straw bed for ourselves that the traveler may lie in our bed and rest; after walking the whole day she must be tired."

"With all my heart," he replied, "I will go and ask her to do so."

The good fairy, however, would not at first consent to accept this kind offer, but they were so earnest in their request that at length she could not refuse. The poor man and his wife, therefore, slept on their bed of straw, and the fairy rested comfortably in the bed.

In the morning, when she rose, she found the wife cooking an early breakfast for her of the best they had. The fairy again took her place at the table, the sun shone brightly into the room, and the faces of the poor people wore such a happy, contented expression that she was sorry to leave them.

As she rose to go she wished them farewell, and thanked them for their hospitality. But at the door, she turned and said: "As you have been so kind and compassionate to me when you thought I was poor and in need, therefore I will show you that I have power to reward you. Three times shall your wish be granted you."

"What greater blessings can I wish for," said the husband, "but that we two, as long as we live, may be healthy and strong, and that we may always have our simple daily wants provided for? I cannot think of a third wish."

"Would you not like a new house instead of this old one?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," they both cried, "if we have these three wishes granted, we shall want nothing more."

Then the fairy changed the old house into a new one, and promising them the fulfilment of their other wishes, went her way. About noon the owner of the fine house happened to look out of his window, and saw with surprise across from him a pretty new cottage with red tiles, on the spot where the old house once stood. He stared at it for some time, and at last called his wife, and said to her: "Tell me how this can have happened: yesterday, there stood an old wretched-looking hut; today, this beautiful new cottage. Run over, and ask how it has all come about."

The wife went over to ask the poor man to explain this wonderful change. "Yesterday evening," he said, "came a poor traveler to our door and begged for a night's lodging. She was very poorly clad, but we gave her all we had, and our bed. This morning when she left us she offered to grant us the fulfilment of three wishes. We wished for continued health and our daily food as the greatest blessings, and at last she changed our old hut into this new and beautiful cottage."

On hearing this, the rich man's wife ran hastily back, and related to her husband what she had heard. "I could tear and beat myself to pieces," he exclaimed. "Oh, if I had only known! That stranger came here first, such a shabby-looking woman she was, and begged me to give her a night's lodging, but I refused her."

"Never mind," said his wife; "now make haste, get on your horse and ride after this woman; if you can but overtake her you can ask her to grant you three wishes also."

The rich man followed this good advice, saddled his horse, rode after the traveler, and at last overtook her. He spoke to her then most gently and kindly, and hoped that she would not take it amiss that he had not admitted her the evening before. "I assure you," he said, "I was only looking for the key of the house door, and in the meantime you went away; if you should pass our way again you must stay with us."

"Yes," she replied, "I will do so, if I ever pass your house again."

Then the rich man asked the poor woman if she would not grant him three wishes as well as his neighbor. "I would grant you this willingly," replied the fairy, "but I do not think it would be good for you; you have nothing to wish for."

The rich man replied that he could easily find something to wish for that would bring him good fortune, if he only knew that his wishes would be accomplished.

"Very well then," replied the fairy, "ride home, and whatever your three wishes are shall be granted."

The rich man had obtained his desire, and he rode homewards think-

ing deeply of what the wishes should be. As he thus thought, he allowed the bridle to hang so loosely that his horse began to caper and dance about till his thoughts were all so scattered, that he could not collect them again. He struck the horse and said, "Be quiet, Bess," but the animal pranced and reared till he was nearly thrown off. At last he became angry, and cried out, "What do you mean by it? I wish your neck was broken."

No sooner had he spoken the words than his horse fell under him, and lay dead and motionless, and so was his first wish fulfilled. As he was by nature avaricious, he would not leave the saddle and bridle behind him, so he cut the straps, hung them on his back, and prepared to walk home, as he was now obliged to do on foot. "We have still two wishes remaining," he said, and comforted himself with the thought.

As he now walked along through the hot sand with the burning noonday sun shining brightly upon him he became fretful with the heat and fatigue. The saddle dragged him back, and seemed ready to fall, and he could not decide what to wish for. "If I were to wish for all the riches and treasures in the world," he said to himself, "what would be the use? I should not know which to choose. I will contrive, however, that when I have gained my two wishes, I shall have nothing else left to wish for." Then he sighed, and said, "If I were only like the Bavarian peasant, who had three wishes offered him. First he wished for a draught of beer. The second time for as much beer as he could drink, and the third time for a whole cask. Each time he thought he had gained what he wanted, but afterwards it seemed to him as nothing."

Presently, there came to him a thought of how happy his wife must be, sitting in their cool room at home, and enjoying something very nice. It vexed him so much not to be there with her, that, without a thought of the consequences, he exclaimed, "Ah! I wish this heavy saddle would slip from my back, and that she was sitting upon it, not able to move."

As the last word fell from his lips, the saddle and bridle vanished, and he became aware that his second wish was fulfilled.

Heated as he became at this thought, he yet ran home, for he wanted to sit alone in his chamber, and think of something great for his last wish. But when he opened the room door there sat his wife on the saddle, screaming and lamenting that she was fixed, and could not get down.

"Make yourself quite happy," he said. "I can wish for all the riches in the world to be ours; and my wish will be accomplished if you will only remain sitting there."

"But," she replied, angrily, "you stupid thing, what would be the

use of all the riches in the world to me if I am obliged to sit always on this saddle? No, no, you wished me here, and now you must wish me off again."

He was obliged, therefore, much against his will, to utter as his third wish that his wife might be set free, and able to alight from the saddle, and the wish was immediately granted.

The rich and selfish man had, therefore, no other result from his three wishes than anger, vexation, trouble, hard words from his wife, and the loss of his horse. The poor man, who was charitable and kind to others, had gained happiness and contentment for the rest of his days.

THE MAN IN THE BEAR'S SKIN

THERE WAS once a young fellow who enlisted as a soldier; he was brave and courageous, and always foremost in the thick of the battle. As long as the war continued he got on very well; but when peace was proclaimed, he received his discharge, and the captain told him he might go as soon as he pleased.

He had, however, no home to go to, for his parents were dead; so at last he thought he would try his brothers, and ask them to give him a home till war broke out again.

But his brothers were hardhearted, and said, "What could we do with you here? You are not fit to help us, so you had better try to provide for yourself."

The soldier had nothing of his own but his gun, so he placed it on his shoulder, and went out into the world to seek for a living.

After walking some distance, he came to a heath, on which only a few trees were to be seen, and these grew in a circle. So, feeling very sorrowful, he sat down under the trees, and began to reflect upon his fate. "I have no money," he said to himself; "I have never learned anything but soldiering, and now peace is proclaimed, I am not wanted. I can see that there is nothing before me but starvation."

At that moment he heard a rustling sound, and looking round, he saw a strange man standing before him; he wore a green coat, and looked rather stately, but had a very ugly cloven foot. "I know very well what you want," said he to the soldier, "and money and possessions you shall have, as much as you can spend, however extravagant you may be. But I must discover first whether you are a coward, that my money may not be thrown away."

"A soldier and afraid! Who can put those two words together?" he replied. "You can try me if you like."

"Willingly," answered the man; "now just look behind you."

The soldier turned and saw an immense bear, who was growling, and trotting towards him. "Oho," cried the soldier; "I will tickle your nose for you presently, my friend, and stop your growling"; and, raising his gun, he shot the bear in the head so surely that he fell all of a heap on the ground, and moved no more.

"I see clearly," said the stranger, "that you are not wanting in courage; but there is one more condition you must agree to."

"If it does not harm me in the future," replied the soldier, who well knew whom he was talking to, "I don't care what I promise to do."

"You can tell for yourself whether the conditions are likely to injure you in the future," was the reply; "they are these: you must neither wash yourself, nor comb your hair, nor cut your nails or beard, nor say your prayers for the next seven years, and I will give you this coat and cloak, which you must wear the whole time. Should you die during the seven years, you are mine; but if you live beyond that time, you will be rich and independent for the rest of your life."

The soldier sat for some minutes thinking of the great poverty in which he then was, and how often he had faced death without fear, and at last decided to accept the stranger's conditions.

The wicked old demon immediately took off the green coat, and, offering it to the soldier said, "Whenever you have that coat on your back, you will find plenty of money in the pocket, if you put your hand in it." Then he pulled off the skin of the dead bear, and giving it to him, said, "This is to be used by you as a cloak and a bed, you must not, for the whole seven years, dare to sleep in any other bed, nor to wear any other cloak, and on this account you shall be called 'Bear-skin.' " Having said this, the stranger vanished.

The soldier immediately put on the coat, and, putting his hands in the pockets, found that the money was a reality. Then he hung the bearskin on his shoulders, and went out into the world rejoicing in his good fortune, and buying all he wished for with his money.

For the first year, his unwashed face, his uncombed and uncut hair and beard did not disfigure him so very much; but during the second year he began to look like a monster. The hair covered the whole of his face, his beard looked like a piece of coarse blanket, his fingers had claws instead of nails, and his face was so covered with dirt that if mustard and cress had been sown there, it would have grown on it.

Those who saw him for the first time always ran away; but wherever he went he gave money to the poor, and therefore they all prayed that he might live for the seven years, and as he paid well for a night's lodging, on all occasions, he was always sure of a shelter.

In the fourth year he came to an inn, but the landlord on seeing him would not take him in, nor even let him sleep in the stables, for he thought such a monster would frighten the horses.

However, when Bearskin put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a handful of gold pieces, the landlord began to soften, and gave him a room in one of the outbuildings, but he made him promise that he would not allow himself to be seen, for fear of getting the house into bad repute.

In the evening, when Bearskin was sitting by himself, and wishing that the seven years were over, he heard in an adjoining room loud lamentations. The soldier had a pitying heart, so he opened the door, and saw an old man with his hands clasped over his head and weeping bitterly.

Bearskin advanced towards him, but the old man sprang up to run away. When, however, he heard a kind, human voice speaking to him in friendly tones, he was inclined to remain; and the soldier's soothing words at last encouraged him to disclose the cause of his grief. His property, he said, had dwindled away by degrees, and now his daughters must starve. He had not, he said, even money enough to pay the landlord, and supposed he should be sent to prison.

"If you have no other trouble," replied Bearskin, "I can help you, for I have plenty of money." Then he sent for the landlord, paid the old man's bill, and gave him a purse full of gold to put in his pocket.

When the old man found himself so quickly relieved from his present anxieties, he knew not how sufficiently to express his thanks. But at length he thought of his daughters. "Come home with me," he said, "I will introduce you to my three daughters; they are wonders of beauty, and you shall have one of them, if you like, for a wife. When they hear all you have done for me, they will not refuse you. You are certainly a strange-looking man, but that is easily got over."

Bearskin was very much pleased with this invitation, and went home with the old man quite readily. No sooner, however, did the eldest daughter catch sight of him, than with a scream of terror she rushed away. The second stood still and looked at him from head to foot.

"How could I accept such a man for a husband?" she said; "why he has not the slightest resemblance to a human being. Why the grizzly bear who came to see us once, and called himself a man, pleased me much better; for he did wear a Hussar's cap and white gloves. If he were only ugly I might get used to him, but not as he is."

The youngest, however, spoke gently, and said, "Dear father, that must be a good man, if he has helped you so generously out of your trouble; and if you have promised him a bride, you must keep your word."

It was a pity that Bearskin's face was so covered with dirt and

hair, or she would have seen how happy he looked at these words. However, he took a ring from his finger, broke it in half, gave her one half, and kept the other for himself. On one half he wrote her name, and on the other his own, and begging her to take care of it, he said, "For three years longer I must travel about, but at the end of that time I will return; if I do not you will be free, for I shall be dead. But pray to God every day that my life may be preserved." Then he said farewell, and left her.

After he was gone, the bride dressed herself in black, and when she thought of her bridegroom the tears would come into her eyes. To her sisters it was a great amusement, and they did nothing but mock and jeer her about her lover. "You must pay attention to the manner in which he takes your hand," said the eldest, "for his claws may be sharp."

"And take care," said the other, "that he does not eat you up if you please him, for bears are fond of sweet things."

"Ah, yes," continued the eldest; "and you must always do as he pleases, or he will growl at you."

"Well," said her sister, "we shall have a merry wedding at all events, for bears are noted for their dancing." The bride kept silence, and her sisters soon found that they could not make her angry with anything they said to her.

Meanwhile, Bearskin was traveling about from one place to another, doing good on every opportunity, and relieving the poor and afflicted with the greatest sympathy. So that he had many to pray for him, that he might live long.

The last day of the seventh year dawned, and Bearskin went out to the heath and seated himself under the trees which grew in a circle. He did not wait long, for with a rush of wind came the demon who had appeared to him just seven years before, and looked at him with a most ill-tempered and disappointed face. He threw down the soldier's own coat, and asked him for his green coat and bearskin cloak.

"Stop a bit," said the soldier, "you are going too fast; you must wash me first."

So the demon was obliged, whether he liked it or not, to fetch water and wash and shave the soldier, and afterwards to comb his hair and cut his nails. When this was done, the brave soldier looked himself again, and, indeed, much handsomer than before.

As soon as his unpleasant companion had happily left him, he rose with a light heart, and went to the town, bought a magnificent velvet suit, and seated himself in a carriage drawn by four splendid white horses, and drove to the house of his bride. No one recognized him. The merchant took him for a nobleman or a field-officer, and led him

into the room where his three daughters sat. He was obliged to yield to the request of the two eldest, that he would sit between them at dinner. They helped him to wine, and placed all the choicest dishes before him, while they thought they had never seen such a handsome man before.

The bride, who sat opposite to him, in her black dress, with down-cast eyes, did not utter a word. At last, when they were alone, the father asked the soldier if he would like to marry either of his daughters. On hearing of this, the two eldest ran away to their rooms to change their dresses; and both arrayed themselves in the gayest attire they possessed, for each fancied she would be the chosen one in preference to her sister.

Meanwhile the stranger found himself alone with his bride, and taking out the half of the ring which he had kept, from his pocket, he threw it into a glass of wine which stood on the table, and presented it to her. As she took it she saw at the bottom of the glass the half of the ring. With a beating heart she lifted a ribbon which hung round her neck, from which the other half was suspended. She placed the two halves together and found that they exactly joined.

Then the soldier, looking fondly at her, exclaimed, "I am your bridegroom, whom you once knew as Bearskin. Through the mercy of heaven I have recovered my natural shape, and am made free from the evil power which caused me to be so disfigured." Then he went over to her, took her in his arms, and kissed her fondly.

Just at this moment the sisters entered the room in full dress; but when they discovered that this handsome young soldier belonged to their sister, and heard that he was the man they had laughed at who was called "Bearskin," they were so overcome with rage and vexation that one went and drowned herself in the well, and the other hung herself on a tree in the garden.

In the evening there was a knock at the door, and when the bride-elect opened it there was a strange man in a green coat, and he said to her, "See, now, I have lost one, but I have gained two instead."

THE LADY AND THE LION

THERE WAS once a man who had to take a long journey, and when he was saying good-bye to his daughters he asked what he should bring back to them.

The eldest wanted pearls, the second diamonds, but the third said, "Dear father, I should like a singing, soaring lark."

The father said, "Very well, if I can manage it you shall have it." And he kissed all three and set off. He bought pearls and diamonds for the two eldest, but he had searched everywhere in vain for the singing, soaring lark, and this worried him for his youngest daughter was his favorite child.

Once his way led through a wood, in the midst of which was a splendid castle. Near it stood a tree, and right up at the top he saw a lark singing and soaring.

"Ah," he said, "I have come across you in the nick of time." And he called to his servant to dismount and catch the little creature. But as he approached the tree, a lion sprang out from underneath and shook himself and roared so that the leaves on the tree trembled. "Who dares to steal my lark?" said he. "I will eat up the thief."

Then the man said, "I didn't know that the bird was yours. I will make up for my fault by paying a heavy ransom. Only spare my life."

But the lion said, "Nothing can save you, unless you promise to give me whatever first meets you when you get home. If you consent, I will give you your life and the bird into the bargain."

But the man hesitated and said, "Suppose my youngest and favorite daughter were to come running to meet me when I go home!"

But the servant was afraid and said, "Your daughter will not necessarily be the first to come to meet you. It might just as well be a cat or a dog."

So the man let himself be persuaded, took the lark, and promised to the lion for his own whatever first met him on his return home. When he reached home and entered his house, the first person who met him was none other than his youngest daughter. She came running up and kissed and caressed him, and when she saw that he had brought the singing, soaring lark she was beside herself with joy.

But her father could not rejoice. He began to cry and said, "My dear child, it has cost me dear for I have had to promise you to a lion. He will tear you in pieces when he has you in his power." And he told her all that had happened and begged her not to go, come what might.

But she consoled him, saying, "Dear father, what you have promised must be performed. I will go, and I will soon soften the lion's heart so that I shall come back safe and sound." The next morning the way was shown to her, and she said good-bye and went confidently into the forest.

Now the lion was an enchanted prince, who was a lion by day, and all his followers were lions too. But by night they reassumed their human form. On her arrival she was kindly received and conducted to the castle. When night fell, the lion turned into a handsome man, and their wed-

ding was celebrated with due magnificence. They lived happily together; sitting up at night and sleeping by day.

One day he came to her and said, "Tomorrow there is a festival at your father's house to celebrate your eldest sister's wedding. If you would like to go my lions shall escort you."

She answered that she was very eager to see her father again, so she went away accompanied by the lions.

There was great rejoicing on her coming, for they all thought that she had been torn to pieces and had long been dead. But she told them what a handsome husband she had and how well she fared, and she stayed with them as long as the wedding festivities lasted. Then she went back again into the wood.

When the second daughter married and the youngest was again invited to the wedding, she said to the lion, "This time I will not go alone. You must come too."

But the lion said it would be too dangerous, for if a gleam of light touched him he would be changed into a dove and would have to fly about for seven years.

"Ah," said she, "only go with me, and I will protect you and keep off every ray of light."

So they went away together and took their little child with them too. They had a hall built with such thick walls that no ray could penetrate, and thither the lion was to retire when the wedding torches were kindled. But the door was made of fresh wood which split and caused a little crack which no one noticed.

Now the wedding was celebrated with great splendor. But when the procession came back from church with a large number of torches and lights, a ray of light no broader than a hair fell upon the Prince, and the minute this ray touched him he was changed. And when his wife came in and looked for him, she saw nothing but a white dove sitting there.

The dove said to her, "For seven years I must fly about the world. Every seventh step I will let fall a drop of blood, and a white feather which will show you the way. If you will follow the track you can free me."

Thereupon the dove flew out of the door. She followed it, and every seventh step it let fall a drop of blood and a little white feather to show her the way. So she wandered about the world, and never rested till the seven years were nearly passed. Then she rejoiced, thinking that she would soon be free of her troubles, but she was still far from release. One day as they were journeying on in the accustomed way, the feather and the drop of blood ceased falling, and when she looked up the dove had vanished.

"Man cannot help me," she thought. So she climbed up to the sun and said to it, "You shine upon all the valleys and mountain peaks. Have you not seen a white dove flying by?"

"No," said the sun, "I have not seen one, but I will give you a little casket. Open it when you are in need."

She thanked the sun and went on till night, when the moon shone out. "You shine all night," she said, "over field and forest. Have you seen a white dove flying by?"

"No," answered the moon, "I have seen none, but here is an egg. Break it when you are in great need."

She thanked the moon and went on till the night wind blew upon her. "You blow among all the trees and leaves. Have not you seen a white dove?" she asked.

"No," said the night wind, "I have not seen one, but I will ask the other three winds, who may perhaps have seen it."

The east wind and the west wind came, but they had seen no dove. Only the south wind said, "I have seen the white dove. It has flown away to the Red Sea, where it has again become a lion, since the seven years are over. And the lion is ever fighting with a dragon who is an enchanted princess."

Then the night wind said, "I will advise you. Go to the Red Sea. You will find tall reeds growing on the right bank. Count them and cut down the eleventh. Strike the dragon with it and then the lion will be able to master it, and both will regain human shape. Next, look round and you will see the winged griffin who dwells by the Red Sea. Leap upon its back with your beloved and it will carry you across the sea. Here is a nut: drop it when you come to mid-ocean. It will open immediately and a tall nut tree will grow up out of the water, on which the griffin will settle. Could it not rest, it would not be strong enough to carry you across. If you forget to drop the nut, it will let you fall into the sea."

Then she journeyed on and found everything as the night wind had said. She counted the reeds by the sea and cut off the eleventh, struck the dragon with it, and the lion mastered it. Immediately both regained human form. But when the Princess who had been a dragon was free from enchantment, she took the Prince in her arms, seated herself on the griffin's back, and carried him off. And the poor wanderer, again forsaken, sat down and cried. At last she took courage and said to herself, "Wherever the winds blow I will go, and as long as cocks crow I will search till I find him."

So she went on a long, long way till she came to the castle where the Prince and Princess were living. There she heard that there was to be a festival to celebrate their wedding. Then she said to herself, "Heaven help me," and she opened the casket which the sun had given her. Inside

it was a dress, as brilliant as the sun itself. She took it out, put it on, and went into the castle, where everyone, including the bride, looked at her with amazement. The dress pleased the bride so much that she asked if it was to be bought.

"Not with gold or goods," she answered, "but with flesh and blood."

The bride asked what she meant and she answered, "Let me speak with the bridegroom in his chamber tonight."

The bride refused. However, she wanted the dress so much that at last she consented, but the chamberlain was ordered to give the Prince a sleeping draught.

At night, when the Prince was asleep, she was taken to his room. She sat down and said, "For seven years I have followed you. I have been to the sun and the moon and the four winds to look for you. I have helped you against the dragon, and will you now quite forget me?"

But the Prince slept so soundly that he thought it was only the rustling of the wind among the pine trees. When morning came, she was taken away and had to give up the dress. And as it had not helped her she was very sad and went into a meadow and cried. While sitting there, she remembered the egg which the moon had given her. She broke it open and out came a hen and twelve chickens all of gold, who ran about chirping and then crept back under their mother's wings. A prettier sight could not be seen.

She got up and drove them about the meadow, till the bride saw them from the window. The chickens pleased her so much that she asked if they were for sale. "Not for gold and goods, but for flesh and blood. Let me speak with the bridegroom in his chamber once more."

The bride said "Yes," intending to deceive her as before, but when the Prince went to his room he asked the chamberlain what all the murmuring and rustling in the night meant. Then the chamberlain told him how he had been ordered to give him a sleeping draught because a poor girl had been concealed in his room, and that night he was to do the same again.

"Pour out the drink and put it near my bed," said the Prince.

At night she was brought in again. And when she began to relate her sad fortunes he recognized the voice of his dear wife, sprang up, and said, "Now I am really free for the first time. All has been as a dream, for the foreign princess cast a spell over me so that I was forced to forget you. But heaven in a happy hour has taken away my blindness."

Then they both stole out of the castle, for they feared the Princess' father, because he was a sorcerer. They mounted the griffin, who bore them over the Red Sea, and when they got to mid-ocean she dropped the nut. On the spot a fine nut tree sprang up, on which the bird rested. Then it took them home, where they found their child grown tall and beautiful, and they lived happily till the end.

THE PEASANT'S CLEVER DAUGHTER

THERE WAS once a peasant who was very poor; he had a small house, but no land in which to grow corn or vegetables. The peasant had an only daughter, and she said one day to her father, "I am sure if the king knew how poor we are, he would give us a little piece of waste land. I shall ask somebody to tell him."

When the king heard how poor they were, he not only sent the peasant a piece of ground but also a small quantity of turf. The father and daughter dug up the ground carefully, for they wished to sow a little corn and make the place fruitful. But while they were digging and turning up the earth, they found a piece of pure gold. On seeing it the father took it up eagerly, and said to his daughter, "As the king has been so kind as to give us the field, we ought to send him this piece of gold."

But the maiden was not willing for her father to do so. "Father," she said, "if we speak of this we shall have to work for nothing, and give up all we find in future, therefore we had better keep silent."

He would not listen, however, to her advice, but took up the piece of gold, carried it to the king, told him where he had found it, and asked if he would accept it as a token of his respect and gratitude. The king took the gold in his hand and asked him if he had not found more. The peasant replied truthfully "No." But he was not believed. "I must have the whole of the gold," said the king, "it is not likely you would bring me all you have found, so go and fetch it."

In vain the peasant assured the king that he had found no more; it was as if he spoke to the wind, and at last the poor honest fellow was placed in jail and told that he must remain there till he gave up the rest of the treasure. The servants were told to take him bread and water every day, which were all the provisions allowed to prisoners, but he would neither eat nor drink, and was constantly crying out, "Oh, that I had listened to my daughter! Oh, that I had listened to my daughter!"

Then the servants went to the king and told him what the prisoner was always crying out, and that he would neither eat nor drink. So the king sent for him and asked him what his daughter had said which he wished he had listened to.

"She prophesied," he replied, "that if I took the small piece of gold to the king that we should have to give up all we found afterwards."

"Have you such a clever daughter?" said the king. "Then send for her at once that I may see her."

So the peasant's daughter was obliged to come, and the king was so

pleased with her that he talked to her quite pleasantly, and said: "People tell me that you are very clever; I will therefore give you a riddle to guess, and if you solve it you shall be my wife."

Then she said at once that she would try. So the king said, "Come to me neither clothed nor naked, neither riding nor walking, neither on the road nor on the path; and if you can do all this I will marry you."

The maiden immediately went home, quickly stripped herself, got a large hank of yarn, placed herself in it, and wound it round and round her body till she was quite covered. Then a neighbor, for a small payment, lent her an ass, and she tied the end of the yarn to the ass's tail, so that he dragged her along behind him, therefore she neither rode nor drove. The ass also walked so that she was dragged along in a carriage-wheel rut, and only her great toe touched the ground, and thus she appeared before the king—neither clothed nor naked, neither riding, walking nor driving, and neither on the road nor on the path.

When the king saw her he said she had guessed the riddle, and fulfilled the contract, and therefore he was ready to make her his wife. Her father was immediately released from prison, and the king married his daughter and bestowed upon them all the necessary kingly honors.

A year passed, and one day the king went out on the parade, in front of the castle. It happened just then that a number of peasants, of whom he had bought wood, stood with their wagons before the castle. To some of the wagons oxen were harnessed, and to others horses; among them was a peasant who had two horses and a young foal, and while they stood there the foal ran away and laid itself down between two oxen who were yoked in the wagon of another peasant. On this a dreadful quarrel arose among the peasants. The owner of the oxen said the foal belonged to one of his beasts, and the peasant declared it was the foal of one of his horses, and that it was his. The noise and the fighting became at last so great, that the matter was brought before the king, and he gave as his decision that where the foal was found lying there it should remain, and as that was with the oxen, therefore to the owner of the oxen the foal belonged, and might be taken by him. The other went home mourning and lamenting over the loss of his foal. Now he had heard that the queen was very kind and gracious, although she had been herself a peasant. So he went to her and begged her to help him to get back his foal. She readily agreed to do so, on condition that he would promise not to betray her. "Tomorrow morning, early," she said, "when the king goes out with the officers to relieve guard you place yourself in the road by which they must pass. Take with you a fishing rod and act as if you were fishing in the ditch, which will be dry, but never mind, pull in your line, and jerk it up and down just

as if you had a bite; and if the king or anyone asks you what you are doing, give them the answer that I will tell you."

So the next day, the peasant seated himself by the road and began to fish in a dry ditch. As soon as the king came by he saw him, and sent his attendants to ask the foolish man what he was about. The peasant, on being questioned by the attendant as to what he was doing, replied, "I am fishing."

"Fishing!" he replied, "why you will get none if you fish for a year; there is no water."

"Ah," said the peasant, "it is quite as easy for me to get fish without water as for an ox to be the parent of a horse's foal."

The attendant went back with this answer to the king. The king desired the peasant to be brought before him, and told him he was quite sure that he could not have thought of such an answer himself, and desired him instantly to tell him from whom he had it.

But the peasant refused to admit that the answer was not his own, and he was therefore taken away from the king's presence and beaten, and ill-treated, and bound in fetters, till at last he was obliged to disclose that the queen had told him what to say and do.

As soon as the king returned home, he went to his wife in great anger, and said: "You have been false to me, and have been plotting with a peasant to insult me; now go back where you came from, to your peasant's home; you shall not be my wife any longer."

He told her, however, to take with her from the castle whatever she loved best in the world, and that should be her farewell gift from him. "Dear husband," she replied, "if you wish it, I will do so."

Then she threw her arms round his neck, kissed him, and said she was ready to wish him good-bye, if he would take one parting cup with her. Some wine, into which she had poured a sleeping draught, was brought, and the king drank a large cupful off at once. In a few minutes he sunk into a deep sleep, and then the queen, after covering him with a beautiful white linen cloth, called a servant, and asked him to carry the king out and place him in a carriage that stood at the door. The queen then got in and drove the king to her father's little cottage, and on arriving there he was laid on the bed. The king slept for many hours, but at last he awoke, and finding himself alone, exclaimed, "Where am I?" and called his servants, but none were there. At last his wife came in and approached the bed, and said: "Dear lord and king, you told me to take with me from the castle whatever was best and dearest; now I have nothing in the world better or dearer than you, therefore I have brought you with me."

Tears welled up in the king's eyes when he heard this. "Dearest

wife," he said, "from this hour we belong to each other; you shall never leave me more."

So he took her back to the royal castle, she was again his dear wife. from whom nothing but death could divide him.

ONE-EYE, TWO-EYES, THREE-EYES

THERE WAS once a woman who had three daughters, of whom the eldest was named "One-Eye," because she had only one eye in the middle of her forehead. The second had two eyes, like other people, and she was called "Two-Eyes." The youngest had three eyes, two like her second sister, and one in the middle of her forehead, like the eldest, and she bore the name of "Three-Eyes."

Now because little Two-Eyes looked just like other people, her mother and sister could not endure her. They said to her, "You are not better than common folks, with your two eyes, you don't belong to us."

So they pushed her about, and threw all their old clothes to her for her to wear, and gave her only the pieces that were left to eat, and did everything that they could to make her miserable. It so happened that little Two-Eyes was sent into the fields to take care of the goats, and she was often very hungry, although her sisters had as much as they liked to eat. So one day she seated herself on a mound in the field, and began to weep and cry so bitterly that two little rivulets flowed from her eyes. Once, in the midst of her sorrow she looked up, and saw a woman standing near her who said, "What are you weeping for, little Two-Eyes?"

"I cannot help weeping," she replied; "for because I have two eyes, like other people, my mother and sisters cannot bear me, they push me about from one corner to another and make me wear their old clothes, and give me nothing to eat but what is left, so that I am always hungry. Today, they gave me so little, that I am nearly starved."

"Dry up your tears, little Two-Eyes," said the wise woman; "I will tell you something to do which will prevent you from ever being hungry again. You have only to say to your own goat—

*"Little goat, if you're able,
Pray deck out my table,"*

and immediately there will be a pretty little table before you full of all sorts of good things for you to eat, as much as you like. And when you

have had enough, and you do not want the table any more, you need only say—

*"Little goat, when you're able,
Remove my nice table,"*

and it will vanish from your eyes."

Then the wise woman went away. Now, thought little Two-Eyes, "I will try if what she says is true, for I am very hungry," so she said—

*"Little goat, if you're able,
Pray deck out my table."*

The words were scarcely spoken, when a beautiful little table stood really before her; it had a white cloth and plates, and knives and forks, and silver spoons, and such a delicious dinner, smoking hot as if it had just come from the kitchen. Then little Two-Eyes sat down and said the shortest grace she knew—"Pray God be our guest for all time. Amen—" before she allowed herself to taste anything. But oh, how she did enjoy her dinner, and when she had finished, she said, as the wise woman had taught her—

*"Little goat, when you're able,
Remove my nice table."*

In a moment, the table and everything upon it had disappeared. "That is a pleasant way to keep house," said little Two-Eyes, and felt quite contented and happy. In the evening, when she went home with the goat, she found an earthenware dish with some scraps which her sisters had left for her, but she did not touch them. The next morning she went away with the goat, leaving them behind where they had been placed for her. The first and second times that she did so, the sisters did not notice it, but when they found it happened every day, they said one to the other, "There is something strange about little Two-Eyes; she leaves her supper every day, and all that has been put for her has been wasted; she must get food somewhere else."

So they determined to find out the truth, and they arranged that when Two-Eyes took her goat to the field, One-Eye should go with her to take particular notice of what she did, and discover if anything was brought for her to eat and drink.

So, when Two-Eyes started with her goat, One-Eye said to her, "I am going with you today to see if the goat gets her food properly while you are watching the rest."

But Two-Eyes knew what she had in her mind. So she drove the goat into the long grass, and said, "Come, One-Eye, let us sit down here and rest, and I will sing to you."

One-Eye seated herself; and, not being accustomed to walk so far,

or to be out in the heat of the sun, she began to feel tired, and as little Two-Eyes kept on singing, she closed her one eye, and fell fast asleep. When Two-Eyes saw this, she knew that One-Eye could not betray her, so she said,

*"Little goat, if you are able,
Come and deck my pretty table."*

She seated herself when it appeared, and ate and drank very quickly, and when she had finished, she said,

*"Little goat, when you are able,
Come and clear away my table."*

It vanished in the twinkling of an eye; and then Two-Eyes woke up One-Eye, and said, "Little One-Eye, you are a clever one to watch goats; for, while you are asleep, they might be running all over the world. Come, let us go home."

So they went to the house, and little Two-Eyes again left the scraps on the dish untouched, and One-Eye could not tell her mother whether little Two-Eyes had eaten anything in the field; for she said to excuse herself, "I was asleep."

The next day the mother said to Three-Eyes, "You must go to the field this time, and find out whether there is anyone who brings food to little Two-Eyes; for she must eat and drink secretly."

So, when little Two-Eyes started with her goat, Three-Eyes followed, and said, "I am going with you today, to see if the goats are properly fed and watched."

But Two-Eyes knew her thoughts; so she led the goat through the long grass to tire Three-Eyes, and at last she said, "Let us sit down here and rest, and I will sing to you, Three-Eyes."

She was glad to sit down; for the walk, and the heat of the sun, had really tired her; and as her sister continued her song she was obliged to close two of her eyes, and they slept, but not the third; in fact, Three-Eyes was wide awake with one eye, and heard and saw all that Two-Eyes did; for poor little Two-Eyes, thinking she was asleep, said her speech to the goat, and the table came with all the good things on it, and was carried away when Two-Eyes had eaten enough, and the cunning Three-Eyes saw it all with her one eye. But she pretended to be asleep when her sister came to wake her, and told her she was going home.

That evening, when little Two-Eyes again left the supper they placed aside for her, Three-Eyes said to her mother, "I know where the proud thing gets her good eating and drinking." And then she described all she had seen in the field. "I saw it all with one eye," she said; "for she

had made my other two eyes close with her fine singing, but luckily the one in my forehead remained open."

Then the envious mother cried out to poor little Two-Eyes, "You wish to have better food than we, do you? You shall lose your wish." She took up a butcher's knife, went out, and stuck the good little goat in the heart, and it fell dead.

When little Two-Eyes saw this, she went out into the field; seated herself on a mound, and wept most bitter tears.

Presently, the wise woman stood again before her, and said, "Little Two-Eyes, why do you weep?"

"Ah!" she replied, "I must weep. The goat who every day spread my table so beautifully has been killed by my mother, and I shall have again to suffer from hunger and sorrow."

"Little Two-Eyes," said the wise woman, "I will give you some good advice. Go home, and ask your sister to give you the inside of the slaughtered goat, and then go and bury it in the ground in front of the house door."

On saying this the wise woman vanished.

Little Two-Eyes went home quickly, and said to her sister, "Dear sister, give me some part of my poor goat. I don't want anything valuable. Only give me the inside."

Her sister laughed, and said, "Of course you can have that, if you don't want anything else."

So little Two-Eyes took the inside; and in the evening, when all was quiet, buried it in the ground outside the house door, as the wise woman had told her to do.

The next morning when they all rose, and looked out of the window, there stood a most wonderful tree, with leaves of silver, and apples of gold hanging between them. Nothing in the wide world could be more beautiful or more costly. They none of them knew how the tree could come there in one night excepting little Two-Eyes. She supposed it had grown up from the inside of the goat; for it stood over where she had buried it in the earth.

Then said the mother to little One-Eye, "Climb up, my child, and break off some of the fruit from the tree."

One-Eye climbed up, but when she tried to catch a branch, and pluck one of the apples, it escaped from her hand, and so it happened every time she made the attempt, and, do what she would, she could not reach one.

"Three-Eyes," said the mother, "climb up, and try what you can do; perhaps you will be able to see better with your three eyes, than One-Eye can."

One-Eye slid down from the tree, and Three-Eyes climbed up. But Three-Eyes was not more skilful; with all her efforts she could not draw the branches, nor the fruit, near enough to pluck even a leaf, for they sprang back as she put out her hand.

At last the mother was impatient, and climbed up herself, but with no more success, for, as she appeared to grasp a branch, or fruit, her hand closed upon thin air.

"May I try?" said little Two-Eyes; "perhaps I may succeed."

"You, indeed!" cried her sisters; "you, with your two eyes, what can you do?"

But Two-Eyes climbed up, and the golden apples did not fly back from her when she touched them, but almost laid themselves on her hand, and she plucked them one after another, till she carried down her own little apron full.

The mother took them from her, and gave them to her sisters, as she said little Two-Eyes did not handle them properly; but this was only from jealousy, because little Two-Eyes was the only one who could reach the fruit, and she went into the house feeling more spiteful to her than ever.

It happened that while all three sisters were standing under the tree together, a young knight rode by. "Run away, quick, and hide yourself, little Two-Eyes; hide yourself somewhere, for we shall be quite ashamed for you to be seen." Then they pushed the poor girl, in great haste, under an empty cask, which stood near the tree, and several of the golden apples that she had plucked along with her.

As the knight came nearer, they saw he was a handsome man; and presently he halted, and looked with wonder and pleasure at the beautiful tree with its silver leaves and golden fruit.

At last he spoke to the sisters, and asked, "To whom does this beautiful tree belong? If a man possessed only one branch he might obtain all he wished for in the world."

"This tree belongs to us," said the two sisters, "and we will break off a branch for you, if you like." They gave themselves a great deal of trouble in trying to do as they offered; but all to no purpose, for the branches and the fruit evaded their efforts, and sprung back at every touch.

"This is wonderful," exclaimed the knight, "that the tree should belong to you, and yet you are not able to gather even a branch."

They persisted, however, in declaring that the tree was their own property. At this moment, little Two-Eyes, who was angry because her sisters had not told the truth, caused two of the golden apples to slip out from under the cask, and they rolled on till they reached the feet

of the knight's horse. When he saw them, he asked in astonishment where they came from.

The two ugly maidens replied, that they had another sister, but they dared not let him see her, for she had only two eyes, like common people, and was named little Two-Eyes.

But the knight felt very anxious to see her, and called out, "Little Two-Eyes, come here." Then came Two-Eyes, quite comforted, from the empty cask, and the knight was astonished to find her so beautiful.

Then he said, "Little Two-Eyes, can you break off a branch of the tree for me?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, "I can, very easily, for the tree belongs to me." And she climbed up, and, without any trouble, broke off a branch with its silver leaves and golden fruit, and gave it to the knight.

He looked down at her as she stood by his horse, and said, "Little Two-Eyes, what shall I give you for this?"

"Ah!" she answered, "I suffer from hunger and thirst, and sorrow, and trouble, from early morning till late at night; if you would only take me with you, and release me, I should be so happy."

Then the knight lifted the little maiden on his horse, and rode home with her to his father's castle. There she was given beautiful clothes to wear, and as much to eat and drink as she wished and as she grew up, the young knight loved her so dearly, that they were married with great rejoicings.

Now, when the two sisters saw little Two-Eyes carried away by the handsome young knight, they were overjoyed at their good fortune. "The wonderful tree belongs to us now," they said; "even if we cannot break off a branch, yet everybody who passes will stop to admire it, and make acquaintance with us, and, who knows, we may get husbands after all."

But, when they rose the next morning, lo! the tree had vanished, and with it all their hopes. And on this very morning, when little Two-Eyes looked out of her chamber window of the castle, she saw, to her great joy, that the tree had followed her.

Little Two-Eyes lived for a long time in great happiness; but she heard nothing of her sisters, till one day, two poor women came to the castle, to beg for alms. Little Two-Eyes saw them, and, looking earnestly in their faces, she recognized her two sisters, who had become so poor that they were obliged to beg their bread from door to door.

But the good sister received them most kindly, and promised to take care of them and give them all they wanted. And then they did indeed repent and feel sorry for having treated her so badly in their youthful days.

THE FOX AND THE HORSE

A PEASANT once had a faithful horse who had grown old and could not serve his master any longer, and therefore he did not care to provide him with food, so he said to him: "I really do not want you any more, for you are of no use to me, but if you can prove your strength by bringing me a lion, I will keep you as long as you live; but now just walk out of my stable and go and make yourself a home in the fields."

The horse, feeling very sad, wandered away till he came to a wood, so that he might shelter himself under the trees in bad weather. A fox met him, and said: "Friend, why do you hang your head and look so lonely?"

"Ah," replied the horse, "greed and faithfulness cannot dwell together in one house. My master has forgotten how many years I have served him and carried him safely from place to place, and now that I am unable to plow any longer he will not provide me with food and has sent me away."

"Without any consolation?" asked the fox.

"The consolation was worthless," he replied. "He told me that if I was strong enough to bring him a lion he would take me back and keep me, but he knows very well that I could not possibly do that."

Then said the fox, "Don't be downhearted; I can help you, so just lie down here, stretch yourself out as if you were dead, and do not move."

The horse did as the fox told him, while the fox went to a lion, whose den was not far off, and said to him, "Yonder lies a dead horse; come with me, and I will show you where it is, and you can have a good feast."

The lion went with him, but when they reached the spot the fox said, "You cannot make a meal comfortably here; I'll tell you what I will do, I will tie the horse on to you by the tail, and then you can drag him to your den and consume him at your leisure."

The lion was pleased with this advice; he placed himself near the horse, and stood quite still to enable the fox to tie the tail securely. But in doing so he contrived to twist it round the lion's legs so tightly that with all his strength he could not move them. When the fox had accomplished this feat, he struck the horse on the shoulder and cried, "Gee up, old horse, gee up."

Up sprang the horse, and started off at full speed, dragging the lion with him. As they dashed through the wood the lion began to roar, and roared so loud that all the birds flew away in a fright. But the horse let

him roar, and dragged him along over field and meadow to his master's door. As soon as the surprised master saw what his horse had done, he said to him, "As you have accomplished what I required, you shall now stay with me and have food and shelter as long as you live."

CLEVER PEOPLE

ONE DAY a farmer fetched his boxwood stick out of the field, and said to his wife, "Irine, I am going away into the country, and shall return in three days. If the cattle dealer should come to trade with us, and wish to buy our three cows, you can let him see them; but you must not allow them to go for less than two hundred dollars—not a penny less, do you hear?"

"Be off with you if you are going," she replied. "I will do as you say."

"I hope you will," he cried. "But you are little better than a child who has fallen on its head. You'll forget all I have told you in an hour. But I can only promise you that if you make a stupid mess of this business I will stripe your back till it is black and blue, and that without any color, but with this bare stick that I hold in my hand; and the marks shall last for a whole year. Therefore, you had better not forget."

The next morning the cattle dealer came, and the wife had no occasion to say much to him. When he had seen the cows, and had asked the price, he said, "I am quite willing to take the animals. They are very cheap." Then she unfastened the chain, and drove them out of the stable.

But when they reached the yard gate, and the driver wished to lead them out, the wife seized him by the sleeve, and said, "You must first give me the two hundred dollars, or I cannot let them go with you."

"All right," answered the man. "But I have forgotten to buckle on my money-pouch this morning. Do not be uneasy. You shall have security till I pay. I will take two cows with me, and leave the third behind with you, so that will be a good guarantee for my return."

The woman was deceived. She allowed the man to march off with the two cows, and said to herself, "How pleased Hans will be when he sees how cleverly I have managed."

The farmer came home as he had said on the third day, and asked immediately whether the cows had been sold.

"Yes, most certainly, dear Hans," answered the wife, "and for two hundred dollars, as you told me. They are scarcely worth so much, but the man took them without the slightest objection to the price."

"Where is the money?" asked the farmer.

"I have not got it yet," she replied. "He had forgotten his money-bag; but he will bring it soon, and he has left good security behind him."

"What has he left?" asked the farmer.

"One of the three cows," she said. "He would not take that one till he had paid for the other two. I have managed very cleverly. I have kept back the smallest cow because it eats the least."

In a rage and fury, the man lifted his stick to inflict upon his wife the stripes with which he had threatened her. Suddenly he let it fall again without touching her, and said, "You are the most stupid goose that ever waddled about on this earth, but I pity you. However, I am going again into the country for three days, and if I find anyone during that time as silly as you are, then you will escape; but if I do not, then you shall receive your well-deserved reward without mercy."

Then he went out onto the highroad, seated himself on a stone, and waited for something to help him in his search. Presently he saw a wagon coming along, in which sat a woman on a bundle of straw, but near enough to guide the oxen who drew it. "Ah," thought the man, "here is what I seek; I will try her." He sprang up as he spoke, and ran before the wagon, here and there, as if he was undecided which way to go.

"What do you want, grandfather?" said the woman. "I do not know you; where do you come from?"

"I have fallen from heaven," he replied, "and have no idea how to get back again; can you take me there?"

"No," said the woman; "I do not know the way; but as you have come from heaven, can you tell me how my husband is going on. He has been there this three years; you must have seen him."

"I have seen him, certainly," replied the man; "but it is not every man that is contented, even there. Your husband has to watch the sheep, and the precious animals give him plenty of work. They run from the mountains, and wander into the wilderness, and he has to run after them and bring them home. In consequence of this, his clothes are torn to rags, and are falling off his back, and there are no tailors there; they are not admitted, as you know we are told in the story."

"Now, who would have thought of that?" cried the wife; "but stay, I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll go and fetch my husband's Sunday coat which hangs in the wardrobe, then he will look respectable; that is, if you will be good enough to take it."

"No use at all," said the farmer; "no one can venture to take clothes to heaven, they are always taken away at the door."

"Well, then," cried the woman, "yesterday I sold my beautiful

meadow, and a fine lot of money I got for it. I will send him that. If you stick a purse of money in your pocket, no one will notice it as you go in."

"If nothing else can be done," said the man evasively, "then I will oblige you in this matter."

"Stay here, and sit down for a while, then," said the woman; "I will go and fetch the purse, and be back again very soon. I shall not sit on the truss of straw; but stand up, so that I can guide the oxen better."

Away she drove as she spoke, and the man thought to himself: "She has a good stock of folly at all events, and if she really brings the money, my wife will be lucky, and escape without a single stripe." He had not waited long before he saw her running back to him with the purse of money in her hand, which she herself placed in his pocket. Then she thanked him a thousand times for his kindness, and went away.

But, on reaching home, she met her son coming from the field, and told him what an unexpected thing had happened to her. "I am so delighted," she continued, "that I really met with some one who has seen my poor husband, and to be able to send him something, for the man told me he was suffering for want of clothes and money."

The son was full of wonder at this account; but presently he exclaimed, "Mother, men do not come from heaven every day. I will go out immediately and try to find this man, for I should like to see him; he will be able to tell me how it looks up there, and what work there is to do." So he went out, saddled his horse, and rode away quickly.

He had not gone far before he saw the farmer sitting under a willow tree, counting the money that was in the purse. "Have you seen a man pass here who has just come from heaven?" asked the youth.

"Yes," answered the farmer; "but he has set out to return, and has taken the road over yonder mountain, which is rather a nearer way. You could overtake him, if you rode quickly."

"Ah," said the young man, "I have been the whole day hard at work, and the ride here has tired me. You know the man, so will you be so good as to seat yourself on my horse, and overtake him, and bring him back here?"

"Ah," thought the farmer, "here is another with no wick in his lamp. Why should I not do you this favor?" said he aloud, as he mounted the horse, and rode away at a rapid trot.

The young man remained sitting where the farmer had left him till night came on, but he did not return. "Ah, well," he thought, "the man was, no doubt, in a great hurry to get back to heaven, and the farmer has lent him the horse to take to my father." He went home, and told his mother what had happened, and finished by saying, "The man has,

no doubt, sent the horse to my father, that he may not have to run about so much on foot after the sheep."

"It is all right," she replied, "for your legs are still young, and you can easily go about on foot," and so they submitted to their losses.

As soon as the farmer returned home, he placed the horse which the youth had lent him in the stable, near the remaining cow, and then went in to his wife. "Irine," he said, "you are very lucky. I have found two who are still more silly fools than you are; this time, therefore, you will get off without one stripe. I will reserve them for another occasion."

Then he took out his pipe, lighted it, seated himself in the old arm-chair, and said: "This has been a good speculation—a sleek horse for two poor, lean cows, and a purse full of money into the bargain. If stupidity always brought me so much as this, I should be quite willing to keep you in grand style, wife. After all," thought the farmer, "she's dumb, but I love her."

THE MILLER'S BOY AND HIS CAT

A MILLER once lived in an old mill; he had neither wife nor children, and three miller's apprentices worked for him in the house and in his business. When they had been with him some years, he said to them one day: "I am getting old, and I shall soon want to sit in the chimney-corner without work. Whichever of you, therefore, brings me the best horse shall have the mill, and only have to support me till my death."

The youngest of these apprentices was quite a boy, and the others considered him silly; they were also envious at the thought that he might have the mill, so they determined to prevent him from trying for it. They started, however, together on their expedition, but when they got outside the town, the two said to him: "Silly Hans, you had better stay here; you will never find a horse if you were to try for your whole life."

Hans, however, wanted to go with them, and as night came on they arrived at a cave, in which they laid themselves down to sleep. The two elder youths, who fancied themselves very clever, waited till Hans was asleep, and then rose up and ran away as fast as they could, leaving him behind alone, and thought they had managed most cleverly to get rid of him.

Hans awoke at dawn, and found himself lying in a deep hole; and after looking all about him, and seeing no one near, he exclaimed, "Oh,

dear! Where am I?" Then he roused himself and scrambled out of the hole, and wandered into the wood. "Ah," he thought, "here I am, in the wood, quite forsaken and alone. How am I ever to find a horse?"

As he walked on in deep thought, a little tabby cat met him, and said to him in a most friendly manner, "Hans, what can I do for you?"

"Ah," he replied, "you can't help me, puss."

"Well," she said, "I know exactly what you are longing for: you want a beautiful horse. Come with me, then, and be my true knight for seven years, and I will give you one more beautiful than you have ever seen in all your life."

"This is a wonderful cat," thought Hans. "However, I will see if what she says is true."

Then she took him with her to a little enchanted castle, in which there were nothing but cats as servants, who waited upon the tabby cat. They sprung nimbly up the steps before the visitor, and seemed good-natured, merry creatures.

In the evening, while the mistress and Hans sat at supper, three of them came in and performed music. One played the violin, another the bass fiddle, and the third blew out his cheeks as much as possible in playing the bugle. When supper was ended, the other cats cleared the table and moved it away.

Then said the mistress cat: "Come, Hans, we will have a dance; will you dance with me?"

"No," he replied; "I could not dance with a pussy-cat—I never did such a thing in my life."

"Oh, well, never mind," she said, and told the other cats to take him to bed. They lighted him to a little bedroom; and then one pulled off his shoes, another his stockings, and as soon as he was in bed, they blew out the light and left him.

The next morning they came again and helped him out of bed; one pulled on his stockings, another tied on his garters, and a third washed his face, while a fourth dried it with her tail.

"That is certainly a very soft towel," he said to himself, and went to his breakfast.

During each day the cats had to cut up wood into little pieces, as well as wait upon their mistress, and for this purpose they had an ax and a wedge of silver, and a chopper of gold. But at first Hans did very little; he remained in the house, had plenty of good eating and drinking, and saw no one but the tabby cat and her domestics.

At last one day she said to him: "Go out into my meadow, Hans, and mow the grass, and make it into hay." And for this purpose she gave him a silver scythe, and a gold whetstone and rake, and told him to be sure to bring them back again safely.

Away went Hans, and soon accomplished his task, bringing home the hay and the tools to the house as he had been told.

"Am I to have my reward now?" he asked.

"No," she replied; "you must do something else for me first. You will find timber outside, and carpenter's tools all of silver, and everything necessary for building, so I want you to build me a house."

Hans set to work and soon built the house, and when it was finished, he said: "I have done all you told me, but still there is no horse for me."

By this time the seven years had really gone by, so the cat asked him if he would like to see his horse.

"Yes, indeed," he replied.

So she led him out to the door, and when it was opened he saw standing before it twelve horses. Ah, how proud and spirited they looked! Their skins shone and glittered so brightly that his heart was in his mouth for joy.

After he had admired them, the cat took him into the castle, gave him a good dinner, and said: "I shall not give you the horse yet; but you must go home, and in three days I will come myself and bring it to you."

So she started him off, and herself showed him the way back to the mill.

During the time he had stayed with her, however, she had given him no new clothes; so that he was obliged to wear those he had brought with him, and a smock frock, which was not only too short and small for him, but all in rags. When he reached home he found the two other lads had returned and brought their horses with them; but although they looked sleek and fine, one was lame and the other blind.

"Well, Hans," they said when they saw him, "where is your horse?"

"It will be here in three days," he replied.

They laughed at him and said, "Ah, that is very likely; just catch any fine horses coming here for you."

Hans said nothing, but went into the room; and when the miller saw him, he cried, "You shall not sit at the table with us in such a torn and ragged condition; if any one should come in I should be ashamed to see you here." So they gave him something to eat outside.

When evening came, the other apprentices would not let him sleep in the same room with them so he was obliged to go out and creep into the hen-house and lie down on the straw.

The third morning came, and very early, not long after they were all up, a splendid carriage drawn by six horses drove to the door. The horses were as beautiful and as sleek as those Hans had seen, and their harness glittered in the light. But with the carriage were several serv-

ants, and one of them led a most beautiful horse, which was for the poor miller's boy.

The carriage stopped, and a beautiful princess alighted, who was no other than the tabby cat whom Hans had released from enchantment, by serving her willingly for seven years. She entered the mill and asked the miller where his youngest apprentice was.

"We cannot have him in the mill now," he replied, "he is so torn and ragged; he is outside in the hen-house."

"I will fetch him myself then," said the princess. So she called her servants, and they followed her, with new and elegant clothes, and told them to lead him to the house, and desire him to throw off the rags and the old smock frock, and wash and dress himself in the new attire; and when he had done so no prince could look more elegant.

Meanwhile, the princess returned to the mill and asked to see the horses which the other apprentices had brought, and she found that one was blind and the other lame. Then she asked her servants to bring the horse which was intended for Hans; and when it was brought into the court, and the miller had looked at it, the princess said, "That horse is for your youngest apprentice."

"Then," said the miller, "he must have the mill."

"No," said the princess, "he will not need it; you may keep the mill and the horse also." And then Hans appeared splendidly dressed, and she told him to take a seat in her carriage, and they drove away together.

They went first to the small house which Hans had built with the silver tools, it was now a beautiful castle all shining with gold and silver. They were married soon after, and Hans became so rich that he never wanted anything again as long as he lived. No one, therefore, can ever say that because a man is silly he will never be rich.

THE WOLF AND THE FOX

A WOLF once made friends with a fox, and kept him always by him, so that whatever the wolf wanted, the fox was obliged to do, because he was the weakest, and could not, therefore, be master. It happened one day that they were both passing through a wood, and the wolf said, "Red fox, find me something to eat, or I shall eat you."

"Well," replied the fox, "I know a farmyard near by, in which there are two young lambs; if you like I will go and fetch one." The wolf was

quite agreeable, so the fox went to the field, stole the lamb, and brought it to the wolf; he then returned to find something for himself.

The wolf soon ate up the lamb, but he was not satisfied, and began to long so much for the other lamb, that he went to fetch it himself. But he managed so awkwardly that the mother of the lamb saw him, and began to cry and bleat fearfully; and the farmer came running out to see what was the matter. The wolf got so terribly beaten that he ran limping and howling back to the fox. "You have led me into a pretty mess," he said. "I wanted the other lamb, and because I went to fetch it, the farmer has nearly killed me."

"Why are you such a glutton, then?" replied the fox.

Another day, as they were in a field, the greedy wolf exclaimed, "Red fox, if you don't find me something to eat, I shall eat you up."

"Oh! I can get you some pancakes, if you like," he said; "for I know a farmhouse where the wife is frying them now."

So they went on together, and the fox sneaked into the house, sniffed, and smelled about for some time, till he at last found out where the dish stood. Then he dragged six pancakes from it, and brought them to the wolf.

"Now you have something to eat," said the fox, and went away to find his own dinner.

The wolf, however, swallowed the pancakes in the twinkling of an eye, and said to himself, "They taste so good I must have some more." So he went into the farm kitchen, and, while pulling down the pancakes, upset the dish, and broke it in pieces.

The farmer's wife heard the crash, and came rushing in; but when she saw the wolf, she called loudly for the farmhands, who came rushing in, and beat him with whatever they could find, so that he ran back to the fox in the wood with two lame legs, howling terribly.

"How could you play such a dirty trick on me?" he said. "The farmer nearly caught me; and he has given me such a thrashing."

"Well, then," replied the fox, "you should not be such a glutton."

Another day, when the wolf and the fox were out together, and the wolf was limping with fatigue, he said, "Red fox, find me something to eat, or I shall eat you."

The fox replied, "I know a man who has been slaughtering cattle today; and there is a quantity of salted meat lying in a tub in the cellar. I can fetch some of that."

"No," said the wolf; "let me go with you this time. You can help me if I cannot run away fast enough."

"You may come for all I care," replied Reynard, and showed him on the way many of his tricks; and at last they reached the cellar safely.

There was meat in abundance. The wolf made himself quite at home, and said, "There will be time to stop when I hear any sound."

The fox also enjoyed himself; but he kept looking round now and then; and ran often to the hole through which they had entered to try if it was still large enough for his body to slip through.

"Dear fox," said the wolf, "why are you running about and jumping here and there so constantly?"

"I must see if anyone is coming," replied the cunning animal, "and I advise you not to eat too much."

The wolf replied, "I am not going away from here till the tub is empty."

At this moment in came the farmer, who had heard the fox jumping about in the cellar. The fox no sooner saw him than with a spring he was through the hole. The wolf made an attempt to follow him; but he had eaten so much, and was so fat that he stuck fast. The farmer on seeing this fetched a cudgel and killed him on the spot. The fox ran home to his den full of joy that he was at last set free from the old glutton's company.

THE GLASS COFFIN

NO ONE SHOULD ever say that a poor tailor cannot rise to honor: it is only necessary for him to hit the right nail on the head, and he is sure to be lucky. A polite, pleasant little apprentice boy was once on his travels, and at length reached a large forest, and, as he knew nothing of the road, he wandered about till he lost himself.

Night came on, and there seemed nothing for him to do but to seek a lodging in this dreadful solitude. The soft moss might have made a most pleasant bed for him, but the fear of the wild beasts would have disturbed his rest, so he was obliged at last to climb to the top of a high tree and make a sleeping room of the branches.

The wind, which was very high, however, waved the branches about so terribly that he could not sleep, and indeed felt thankful that he had brought his goose with him; the weight of this in his pocket kept him firm on the branch, otherwise he would certainly have been blown away.

After having been in the tree about an hour in the darkness—not without great trembling and shaking—he spied at a little distance the glimmer of a light. The thought that he might be near the dwelling of a human being gave him courage; no doubt he should find some better

night's lodging than the top of a tree; he therefore descended cautiously and went towards the light.

It led him to a little cottage that was covered with reeds and rushes. He knocked courageously; the door opened of itself, and he could see by the light which had shone outside a white-haired old man, dressed in many-colored, patchwork clothes which had been sewn together.

"Who are you, and what do you want here?" asked the man, in a snarling voice.

"I am a poor tailor," he replied, "and night has overtaken me in this wilderness. I pray you earnestly to take me in till the morning."

"Go your way," answered the old man, in a surly tone; "I will have nothing to do with strolling vagabonds; you must find a night's lodging elsewhere."

At these words he was about to close the door, but the young man held him by the coat, and begged so touchingly not to be sent away that the old man, who was not so bad as he pretended to be, softened at last and took him in. He also gave him something to eat, and pointed him to a corner of the room in which was a comfortable bed.

The tired tailor required no rocking; he slept till morning, but would not have thought of getting up, had he not been frightened by a loud noise—a violent screaming and roaring which pierced through the thin walls of the house in which he found himself alone.

The tailor was seized with unusual courage, he sprang up quickly, threw on his clothes, and hastened out. There he saw, not far from the house, a great black ox fighting furiously with a stag. Their rage was so fierce, and the tramp of their feet so terrible, that the earth trembled under them.

For a long time it seemed doubtful which would conquer, but at last the stag thrust his horns into the body of his adversary, and with a terrible roar he sunk to the ground; then with another stab from the stag's horn, the ox lay dead at his feet.

The tailor had been too terrified to move, at the sight of the conflict; and when the ox fell dead, he stood looking on almost stunned.

In a moment the stag in full spring pounced upon him, and, before he could escape, picked him up with his horns. The youth had not time to reflect on his position, when he felt himself carried at a rapid rate through wood and meadow, over mountain and valley; he could only hold on with both hands to the end of the horns and give himself up to his fate, for it appeared to him as if he were flying.

At last the stag stood still near a wall of rock and let the tailor sink gently down on the ground. Feeling more dead than alive, he yet did not take long to consider; but as he made a slight attempt to move, the stag stuck his horns so violently into what appeared like a door

in the rock, that it sprang open, and flames of fire rushed out, followed by smoke, in which the stag disappeared.

The tailor knew not what to do or which way to turn, or, indeed, whether he should ever find himself safely out of this dreadful wilderness and again amongst human beings.

While he stood thus irresolute, a voice sounded from the rock, and called him, saying, "Enter without fear. No harm shall come to you."

He hesitated, certainly; but a hidden power seemed to draw him forward. He, therefore, obeyed the voice; and, passing through the iron door, found himself in a lofty and spacious hall. The ceiling, the walls, and the floor of this hall were formed of square polished stones which glittered in the light, and, unknown to him, were symbols containing some particular meaning.

He gazed around him with wonder and fear, and was on the point of going away, when the voice spoke again, and said to him, "Step on that stone which lies in the center of the hall, and there wait for good fortune."

His courage appeared to have grown so rapidly that he at once obeyed the command; but no sooner had he placed his feet on the stone than it sunk slowly down into the depths beneath.

When it again became stationary, and the tailor was able to look about him, he found himself in a spacious hall, quite as large as the one he had just left, but still more wonderful.

In the walls were niches in which stood elegant glass vases full of brightly colored spirits or blue vapor. On the floor of the hall he observed, one opposite the other, two large glass cases which at once excited his curiosity.

He walked across the hall to one of them, and saw in it a beautiful building—an old castle in miniature—containing everything needed for a nobleman's household—barns, stables, outhouses, and everything beautifully and artistically arranged, showing the work of a skillful hand, and the most correct eye for elegance and minuteness.

He would have been quite unable to take his eyes from this wonderful sight if he had not again heard the voice telling him to turn and examine the wonderful glass case which stood opposite the castle.

He stepped across the hall at these words, and saw with astonishment a maiden of the greatest beauty lying in the case as if it were a coffin.

She appeared to be asleep, and her long flaxen hair covered her like a veil of costly material. Her eyes were closed; but the blush tinge on her cheek, and the heaving bosom as she breathed, proved that she still lived.

The tailor stood looking at her with a beating heart; when suddenly her eyes opened, and she gazed at him with a mingled look of joy and

terror. "Righteous Heaven!" she cried at last, "my deliverance is near. Quick, quick! help me to escape from my prison. Just push aside the bolt of this glass coffin, and I am free."

The tailor obeyed without a moment's hesitation; and as soon as he raised the coffin lid the beautiful maiden stepped out, and hastening to a corner of the hall arrayed herself in a large mantle.

She then seated herself on a stone, called the tailor to her, and as she pressed a friendly kiss on his lips, she exclaimed, "My long-expected deliverer, kind Heaven has sent you to me to put an end to my sorrow. On the day this happens your good fortune begins. You are chosen by Heaven to be my future husband, and you will receive from me not only my fondest love, but I can lavish upon you every earthly good, so that you may live in happiness to the end of your days. Sit down again, and listen to the story of my fate:

"I am the daughter of a rich count, and my father died while I was still very young. He left me in his last will to the care of my elder brother, who brought me up.

"We loved each other so tenderly, and were so entirely of the same mind in thought and inclination, that we both made a determination never to marry, but to live with each other to the end of our lives. In our home we had no lack of companions. We had neighbors and friends in abundance, with whom we often exchanged friendly visits.

"It happened one evening, however, that a stranger on horseback arrived at our castle, and under the pretext that he could not reach his destination before midnight, begged for a night's lodging.

"We granted his request with ready courtesy, and invited him to join us at supper. During the repast he conversed so pleasantly, and related so many agreeable and amusing adventures, that my brother was quite delighted with him, and asked him to remain with us for a few days.

"The stranger willingly accepted the invitation, and we stayed up talking till quite late. At last, after showing him to his chamber, I hastened to my own room, feeling very tired, and glad to rest my weary limbs on the soft feathers.

"I had just fallen asleep when I was aroused by the tones of soft and lovely music. I started up at the sounds, but I could not understand where it came from. I was about to rise and call my lady's-maid, who slept in the chamber next mine; but, to my astonishment, I found myself unable to move. It was as if a mountain lay on my breast, and, by some unseen cause, the power of speech was taken from me, and I could not utter a sound.

"At the same time I saw by the light of the night lamp that the stranger had entered my room through two doors which I knew had been locked. He approached, and presently told me that through his knowl-

edge of witchcraft he had not only been able to produce the sweet music, but to pass easily through doors both closely locked, and also to prevent me from moving or arousing the house. That he was there to offer me his hand and his heart, but I felt so repelled by this account of his evil power that I did not deign to answer him a word.

"He stood for a long time immovable, waiting for my answer, and I could see on his countenance a look that made me shrink from him.

"As I still remained silent, he flew into a rage, declaring that he would have revenge, and find means to punish my pride, and with these words he disappeared through the closed doors, and left me. I passed a restless night, and only slept a little towards morning. On awakening, I rose and hastened to my brother, to tell him the strange things that had happened to me, but he was not in his room, and the servants told me that he had started with the stranger to the hunt at break of day.

"I foreboded some evil from this, and, dressing myself very quickly, ordered my palfrey to be saddled, and rode away at full gallop, attended by one servant, to the forest. The servant's horse stumbled and fell, and, in so doing, injured his foot, so that I was obliged to go on alone. After riding rapidly a short distance, I saw the stranger standing near a beautiful white stag, and, as soon as I appeared, he came towards me, leading the stag by a string.

"I asked him where he had left my brother. And then, as I saw tears flowing from the large eyes of the poor animal, I exclaimed: 'Have you changed him to this stag?' Instead of answering me, he burst into a loud laugh.

"On this I became angry, drew a pistol, and fired at the monster; but the ball rebounded from his breast, struck my horse in the head and killed him, while I fell to the ground, and the stranger, murmuring a few words, deprived me of my senses.

"When I recovered consciousness, I found myself here in this underground tomb, shut up in a glass coffin. The wretch appeared to me once more, and said that he had changed my brother into a stag. My castle, with all belonging to it, had shrunk to a small size, and was now locked up in another glass case, and my servants and people had been changed into vapor or smoke, and were confined in vessels of glass. If, however, even now, I would accept his offer, he said, it would be very easy for him to put everything back into its former position. It was only for him to open the vessels, and we should all return to our natural form. I made no reply, but remained as silent as before.

"He then vanished, and left me in my prison, and presently I fell into a deep sleep. Among the pictures which have passed before my imagina-

tion, whether dreaming or waking I know not, was one which consoled me. I dreamed that a young man would come and set me free, and, when I opened my eyes and saw you, I knew that my dream was accomplished. Help me now to complete the change by doing as I ask you. And first, to open the glass chest in which the castle is confined, we must place it on this stone, and stand by it ourselves."

The moment the stone felt the weight, it raised itself with all upon it, and the young man and the lady were lifted through the opening in the ceiling to the upper hall, and out into the open air. Here they had space to set the castle free, and, as the young lady opened the cover of the glass chest, what followed was wonderful to see, for castle, houses, and courts expanded, and spread swiftly, till they resumed their proper shape and size.

They then returned to the underground hall, and placed on the stone the vessels containing spirits and smoke, and no sooner had the young lady opened them, than the vapor and smoke arose, and in a few moments were changed into living men, in whom the young lady recognized her servants, and the people of her household.

Her joy was complete when her brother, who, while a stag, had killed the sorcerer in the form of a bull, came out of the forest in his own manly form, and embraced his sister. And on the very same day the young lady, according to her promise, gave her hand and heart to the lucky tailor at the altar.

DOCTOR KNOW-ALL

THERE LIVED once a poor peasant named Krebs, who drove with two oxen and a cart containing a load of wood through the town, and sold it to a doctor for two dollars. When he went in to receive his money the doctor was at dinner, and the peasant looked at all the good things on the table till he began to long for some of them, and to wish he had been a doctor.

He remained standing for a while after he had received his money, and at last asked if he could not also become a doctor.

"Oh, yes," was the reply. "that can easily be managed, if you wish it."

"What must I do?" asked the peasant.

"You must first buy an A B C book, one in which there is a picture of a farmyard cock. Secondly, you must turn your wagon and oxen into

money, and buy a suit of clothes such as a doctor should wear. Thirdly, have a sign painted and placed over your door with these words, 'I am Doctor Know-all!'"

The peasant followed the doctor's advice, and after a while obtained patients, but not many.

About this time a large robbery was committed at the house of a rich nobleman living near the town, who made it known that he would give a handsome reward to any one who would discover the thief, or restore the money.

It was told to this nobleman that a clever doctor, named Doctor Know-all, lived in the town, who would most likely tell him where to find the lost treasure, and who had stolen it. So the nobleman ordered his carriage, and drove into the town. On seeing him he asked him if he were Doctor Know-all, and, on finding that he really was that great person, he invited him to his house, saying that he required his assistance in discovering the thief and the stolen property.

"I am willing to accompany you, my lord," he replied, "if my wife, Grethel, may go also?"

The nobleman was quite agreeable to this request, and, desiring them to take seats in his carriage, they drove away together.

As soon as they arrived at the house, dinner was laid, and Doctor Know-all and his wife seated themselves at the table, and the servants waited upon them. When the first servant placed a dish on the table containing some delicacy, the doctor touched his wife with his elbow, and said in a low voice, "Grethel, that is the first."

He only meant the first servant to bring the different courses, as he wished her to notice what a number of servants waited at table in a great lord's house. The man thought, however, that he was speaking of him as the first of the thieves, and, as this was the truth, he was in a dreadful fright, and when he got out into the hall, he said to his companions: "That doctor knows everything we have been doing; he has just said that I am the first!"

On hearing this, the other servants felt almost afraid to go into the dining hall; but they were obliged to perform their duty, especially as their master was present. Another servant, therefore, appeared at the second course.

The moment he placed a dish on the table, he heard the doctor say to his wife, "That is the second!"

The man was as much alarmed as his fellow-servant, and got out of the room as quickly as he could. It was the same with the third, for as each appeared the doctor spoke of him to his wife, and they were all obliged to assist in waiting at table. When the fourth servant brought in a dish, and placed it on the table, the nobleman, wishing to

prove the cleverness of his visitor, asked him to say what was under the cover.

Now it happened to be a crab, which, of course, the doctor did not know, so he looked at the covered dish, and felt that he was in a great dilemma, from which he could not escape; so he said in a low tone: "Krebs! Krebs! what will you do?"

But the nobleman only heard the word *Krebs*,* and he cried eagerly: "Yes, it is a crab. Ah, I see now that you know everything, and you will be able to tell me where my money is, and who has stolen it!"

The servants were all terribly alarmed, and winked at the doctor to come out to their offices. As soon as he could get away from the table, he went out, and they all came round him, owned that five of them had stolen the money, and offered him in their terror money to any amount if he would only not betray them. He promised on condition that they would show him where they had hidden the money; and they took him to the spot at once.

On this the doctor was quite satisfied, and, returning to the dining room, seated himself at the table, and said: "My lord, I will now consult my book, and discover where the money is concealed."

The fifth servant, who wanted to hear whether the doctor knew any more about them, crept into the hall, and hid himself to listen. Not thinking of a listener, the doctor pulled out his book, and turned over leaf after leaf, pretending to find the necessary information. At last, addressing the pretended advice in his book, he exclaimed: "You are there, but you will have to come out!"

The hidden man, supposing that the doctor spoke to him, sprang out full of terror, crying: "The man knows everything!"

Doctor Know-all at last took the nobleman to the place where the money was concealed; but he did not tell who had stolen it. So, in addition to the reward offered for the discovery, he received also a good sum from the servants in return for not betraying them, and became a man of great renown.

THE HARE AND THE HEDGEHOG

IT WAS a beautiful morning, about harvest time, the buckwheat was in flower, the sun shining in the heavens, and the morning breeze waving the golden cornfields, while the lark sang blithely in the clear blue sky, and the bees were buzzing about the flowers. The villagers

* *Krebs* is the German for crab.

seemed all alive; many of them were dressed in their best clothes, hastening to the fair.

It was a lovely day, and all nature seemed happy, even to a little hedgehog, who stood at his own door. He had his arms folded, and was singing as merrily as little hedgehogs can do on a pleasant morning. While he thus stood amusing himself, his little wife was washing and dressing the children, and he thought he might as well go and see how the field of turnips was getting on, for, as he and his family fed upon them, they appeared like his own property. No sooner said than done. He shut the house door after him and started off.

He had not gone farther than the little hedge bordering the turnip field, when he met a hare, who was on his way to inspect the cabbages, which he also considered belonged to him. When the hedgehog saw the hare, he wished him "good morning" very pleasantly.

But the hare, who was a grand gentleman in his way, and not very good tempered, took no notice of the hedgehog's greeting, but said in a most impertinent manner, "How is it that you are running about the fields so early this morning?"

"I am taking a walk," said the hedgehog.

"Taking a walk!" cried the hare, with a laugh; "I don't think your legs are much suited for walking."

This answer made the hedgehog very angry. He could bear anything but a reference to his bandy legs, so he said, "You consider your legs are better than mine, I suppose?"

"Well, I rather think they are," replied the hare.

"I should like to prove it," said the hedgehog. "I'll wager anything that if we were to run a race I should win."

"That's a big joke," cried the hare, "to think you could beat me with your bandy legs. However, if you wish it, I have no objection to try. What will you bet?"

"A golden Louis d'or and a bottle of wine."

"Agreed," said the hare; "and we may as well begin at once."

"No, no," said the hedgehog; "not in such a hurry as that. I must go home first and get something to eat. In half an hour I will be here again."

The hare agreed to wait, and away went the hedgehog, thinking to himself, "The hare trusts in his long legs, but I will beat him. He thinks himself a very grand gentleman, but he is only a stupid fellow, after all, and he will have to pay for his pride."

On arriving at home, the hedgehog said to his wife, "Wife, dress yourself as quickly as possible; you must go to the field with me."

"What for?" she asked.

"Well, I have made a bet with the hare of a Louis d'or and a bottle of wine, that I will beat him in a race, which we are going to run."

"Why, husband," cried Mrs. Hedgehog, with a scream, "what are you thinking of; have you lost your senses?"

"Hold your noise, woman," said the hedgehog, "and don't interfere with my affairs. What do you know about a man's business? Get ready at once to go with me."

What could Mrs. Hedgehog say after this? She could only obey and follow her husband, whether she liked it or not. As they walked along together, he said to her, "Now pay attention to what I say. You see that large field? Well, we are going to race across it. The hare will run in one furrow, and I in another. All you have to do is to hide yourself in the furrow at the opposite end of the field from which we start, and when the hare comes up to you, pop up your head and say, 'Here I am.'"

As they talked, the hedgehog and his wife reached the place in the field where he wished her to stop, and then went back and found the hare at the starting place, ready to receive him.

"Do you really mean it?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed," replied the hedgehog, "I am quite ready."

"Then let us start at once," and each placed himself in his furrow as the hare spoke. The hare counted "One, two, three," and started like a whirlwind across the field. The hedgehog, however, only ran a few steps, and then popped down in the furrow and remained still.

When the hare, at full speed, reached the end of the field, the hedgehog's wife raised her head and cried, "Here I am."

The hare stood still in wonder, for the wife was so like her husband that he thought it must be him. "There is something wrong about this," he thought. "However, we'll have another try." So he turned and flew across the field at such a pace that his ears floated behind him.

The hedgehog's wife, however, did not move, and when the hare reached the other end, the husband was there, and cried, "Here I am."

The hare was half beside himself with vexation, and he cried, "One more try, one more."

"I don't mind," said the hedgehog. "I will go on as long as you like."

Upon this the hare set off running, and actually crossed the field seventy-three times; and at one end the husband said, "Here am I," and at the other end the wife said the same. But at the seventy-fourth run the hare's strength came to an end, and he fell to the ground and was dead.

The hedgehog won the Louis d'or and the bottle of wine, and after calling his wife out of the furrow, they went home together in very good

spirits, to enjoy it together; and if they are not dead, they are living still.

The lesson to be learned from this story is, first, that however grand a person may think himself, he should never laugh at others whom he considers inferior, until he knows what they can do; and, secondly, that when a man chooses a wife, he should take her from the class to which he himself belongs; and if he is a hedgehog she should be one also.

THE RICH MAN'S GRAVE

A RICH FARMER was one day standing in his farmyard, and looking with pride on his possessions. The cornfields were full of grain, and the trees laden with fruit. The corn of the previous years, carefully preserved in the granaries, lay in large heaps on the floors, the beams bending beneath its weight. His stables, also, were full of fat oxen, milch cows, and well-fed horses.

After looking over all these stores, he returned to the house, and, entering a room, cast his eyes on the iron chest in which his money lay. As he thus stood contemplating his riches, something knocked sharply—not, however, on the door of the room, but on the door of his heart.

He stood still for a moment, and heard a voice within say: "Have you done well with all your gold and possessions? Have you taken care of the poor? Have you shared your bread with the hungry? Are you satisfied with what you possess, or do you long for more?"

His heart and conscience did not hesitate to reply: "I have been hard and unsympathetic; I have never done anything good for my own relatives; I have never thought of God, but only how I should increase my riches. Had all the world been in my possession, I should still have wanted more!"

As these thoughts arose in his mind, his knees trembled under him, and he was so overcome as to be obliged to sit down. At this moment he heard another knock, but now it was at the door of the room.

"Come in," he cried, and, as the door opened, he saw one of his neighbors, a poor man, who found it a hard matter to support his large family of children.

"I know," thought the poor man as he entered, "that my neighbor is as hard as he is rich; I do not suppose that he will help me; but my children are crying for food, and I must venture."

So he said to the rich man as he entered: "I know you do not like giving or lending, but I have come to you in my trouble as a drowning man catches at straws. My children are hungry; will you lend me four measures of wheat?"

The rich man looked at his neighbor, and a beam of pity for the first time melted the ice of avarice which bound his heart.

"I will not lend you four measures," he said, "but I will give you eight, on one condition."

"What am I to do?" asked the poor man.

"You must promise to watch at my grave for three nights after my death!"

The peasant was secretly troubled by this proposal, but in his present need he would have agreed to anything, so he gave his promise, and carried the corn home with him.

It was as if the rich man had foreseen what would happen to him, for three days later he suddenly died, and no one mourned for him. After he was buried, the peasant remembered his promise. Gladly would he have withdrawn from the task, but he thought, "The man was kind to me; he gave me corn to make bread for my hungry children; besides, I made a promise, and I am bound to keep it."

At nightfall he went to the churchyard, and seated himself near the grave. All was still, the moon threw her soft light over the tombstones, and only the hoot of the owl disturbed the peaceful silence. At sunrise he returned home unhurt, and went again the second night without anything happening even to alarm him.

When the third evening arrived, however, he felt a kind of foreboding that something would occur, and, on entering the churchyard, he saw a man standing by the wall whom he had never seen before. He was not young; he had a scarred face, and eyes that were sharp and piercing.

"What do you want here?" cried the peasant. "Are you not afraid of the lonely churchyard?"

"I want nothing," replied the man, "and I fear nothing. I am like the young man who went out to learn how to fear, and had his trouble for nothing, excepting that he married a king's daughter, and obtained great riches. I am always poor. I am a discharged soldier, and I came to the churchyard to pass the night here, for I have no other shelter."

"If you are not afraid," said the peasant, "then stay with me and help me to watch by this grave."

"Willingly," he replied; "for to mount guard is my trade. Wherever we meet with here, good or bad, I will share the consequences with you."

The peasant consented, and they seated themselves by the grave together. All remained quiet till midnight: at that moment a shrill whistle was heard in the air, and the two watchers saw all at once, standing before them, the Evil One himself in person.

"Be off, you scoundrels," he cried; "he who lies in this grave is mine: I have come to fetch him, and if you do not go away at once, I will wring your necks."

"My lord of the red feather," replied the soldier, "you are not my captain. I cannot, therefore, obey orders from you, and I have never yet learned to fear. So take yourself off: we shall remain here as long as we please."

On seeing the men so firm, the Evil One thought he might easily bribe two such poor scamps as these with gold, so assuming a gentle tone, he asked them if they would resign their position for a purse of gold.

"Come, now, that is worth hearing," said the soldier; "but a purse of gold is not enough. If, however, you can fill my boot with as much gold as it will contain, then we will quit the field and leave the way clear for you."

"I have not so much money with me," he replied, "but I can fetch it. In the neighboring town lives a usurer; he is a great friend of mine, and he will no doubt advance me the money."

When the Evil One had vanished, the soldier pulled off his left boot, and said: "We will lead the black gentleman by the nose this time. Give me your knife, friend." He then cut off the sole of his boot, and fastened the upper-leathers to a tomb close by, so that the foot hung down under the long grass. "All right," said the soldier; "now let the black sweep come back again as soon as he likes."

Then they both seated themselves and waited, but not for long; back came the old gentleman with a little bag of gold in his hand.

"Pour it in," said the soldier, lifting the boot a little. "I'm afraid there's not enough, even now." And as he emptied the bag, the money fell to the ground and the boot remained empty.

"Stupid!" cried the soldier. "You don't know what you are about! I told you it was not enough; go and fetch some more."

The old deceiver shook his head as he went away, and returned in an hour with a much larger sack full of gold under his arm.

"That looks more like business," said the soldier; "but I doubt whether it will fill the boot after all."

The gold clinked as it fell, but the boot remained empty. The black intruder looked in and discovered the fact for himself; then he fell into a rage: "What abominably large calves you must have, to be sure!" he cried, with a sardonic grin.

"What!" exclaimed the soldier, "do you suppose I have a cloven foot like yours? and what makes you so stingy all at once? Go and fetch some more money, or there will be no dealings between us."

The Evil One turned away once more. This time he remained much longer, and at last appeared carrying such a heavy sack on his shoulder that he quite bent under the weight. He poured the contents into the boot, but it remained as empty as before. On seeing this he fell into a furious rage, and was just about to drag the boot from the soldier's hand; but at that moment the first beam from the rising sun appeared in the sky, and with a loud yell the wicked spirit fled; the poor soul was saved.

The peasant wished to divide the gold, but the soldier said: "No; give my share to the poor. I will go home again with you, and we will live upon what is left in peace and happiness to the end of our days."

THE THREE TASKS

THERE ONCE lived a poor maiden, who was young and fair, but she had lost her own mother, and her stepmother did all she could to make her miserable. When she gave her any work to do, she made it as hard and heavy as possible, so that it was often almost beyond her strength. She exerted herself to do what was required of her, but the wicked woman's envious heart made her always discontented with what the poor girl did—it was never enough to please her. The more diligent she was, and the more she had to do, the less thanks she received. It seemed always to her as if she were carrying a great burden, which made her life sad and miserable.

One day her stepmother said to her, "Here are twelve pounds of feathers for you to sort in three different sizes, and if they are not finished by this evening you may expect a sound thrashing. Do you think you are to waste the whole day in idleness?"

After she was gone the poor maiden seated herself by the table, but the tears rolled down her cheeks, for she knew it was impossible for her to finish such a task by the end of the day. She made an attempt, however, but after she had put several feathers together in little heaps, if she happened to sigh, or clasp her hands in her agony, away flew the feathers, and were so scattered that she had to begin her job all over again.

At last she placed her elbows on the table, rested her face in her hands, and cried, "Is there no one in all this earth who will pity me?"

Immediately she heard a soft voice say, "Be comforted, my child; I am come to help you."

The maiden looked up, and saw an old woman standing near her. She took the maiden's hand, and said kindly, "Now tell me what is troubling you?"

She spoke so heartily, that the maiden told her all about her unhappy life, and of one burden after another which her stepmother laid upon her, and of the terrible tasks which never would come to an end. "If I do not finish sorting these feathers by the evening," she said, "my stepmother has threatened to beat me, and I know she will keep her word."

Her tears began to flow as she spoke, but the kind old woman said: "Be at peace, my child, and go and rest awhile; I will finish your work for you."

So she made the young girl lie down on a bed in the room, and, worn out with sorrow, she soon fell asleep.

Then the old woman placed herself at the table by the feathers. Ah, how they flew, and sorted themselves, under the touch of her withered hand! and very soon the whole twelve pounds were finished. When the maiden awoke, there they lay in large snowy heaps, and everything in the room was neat and in order, but the old woman had vanished.

The maiden's heart was full of thankfulness, and she sat still till the evening, when her stepmother came into the room.

She was truly astonished when she found the feathers finished. "See now," she said at last, "what people can do when they are industrious! But why are you sitting there, with your hands in your lap? can you find nothing else to do?" As she left the room, she said to herself, "The creature can do anything; I must give her something more difficult next time."

On the morrow, she called the maiden to her, and said, "There is a large spoon for you; now go and ladle out the water from the pond that lies near the garden, and if by evening you have not reached the bottom, you know what you have to expect."

The maiden took the spoon, and saw that it was full of holes, and, even if it had not, it would have been impossible for her to empty the pond with it.

She made an attempt, however; knelt by the water, into which her tears fell, and began to scoop it out. But the good old woman again made her appearance, and, when she saw the cause of her sorrow, she said, "Be comforted, my child, and go and rest in the shrubbery; I will do your work for you."

As soon as the old woman was alone, she merely touched the water; it immediately rose, like a mist, in the air, and mingled itself with the

clouds. Gradually the pond became empty, and when, at sunset, the maiden awoke, the water had disappeared, and she saw only the fish writhing in the mud at the bottom. She at once went to her stepmother, and showed her that she had finished her task.

"You should have finished it long ago," she said; but she was pale with anger, and determined to think of some still more difficult task for the poor girl.

Next morning she again called her, and said, "Today I shall expect you to go into the valley, and on the plain build me a beautiful castle, which must be finished by the evening."

"Oh," exclaimed the poor maiden in terror, "how can I ever perform such a great work as this?"

"I will have no excuses," screamed the stepmother. "If you can empty a pond with a spoor full of holes, you can build me a castle. I shall expect it to be ready today, and if you fail in the slightest thing, whether in kitchen or cellar, you know what is before you."

She drove the poor girl out as she spoke, and, when she reached the valley, she found it full of rocks, piled one over the other, and so heavy that, with all her strength, she could not move even the smallest.

She seated herself, and began to weep; yet still hoping for the assistance of the kind old woman, who did not keep her waiting long, but greeted her, when she appeared, with words of comfort.

"Go and lie down in the shade and sleep," she said; "I will build a castle for you, and, when the happy time comes, you can have it yourself."

As soon as the maiden had gone away, the old woman touched the gray rocks, and immediately they began to move, then to rock together, and presently stand upright, as if they had been walls built by giants. Within these walls the castle rose, as if numberless invisible hands were at work, laying stone upon stone. The earth trembled, as large halls expanded, and stood near each other in order. The tiles on the roof arranged themselves regularly, and, before noon, the weathercock, like a golden maiden with flying drapery, stood on the pinnacle of the tower.

The interior of the castle was not finished till evening; and how the old woman managed I cannot say, but the walls were covered with silk and velvet, richly embroidered; and decorated chairs and sofas, marble tables, and other elegant articles, furnished the rooms. Cut glass chandeliers hung from the ceilings, and sparkled in the light of many lamps. Green parrots sat in golden cages, and foreign birds, who sang sweetly, were in every room. Altogether, the castle was as magnificent as if built for the king himself.

It was after sunset when the maiden awoke, and, seeing the glitter

of a thousand lamps, she ran with hasty steps, and, finding the gate open, entered the court. The steps leading to the entrance hall were covered with red cloth, and the gilded balconies were full of rich and blooming flowers. All was so magnificently beautiful that the maiden stood still with astonishment.

She knew not how long she might have remained standing thus, if she had not thought all at once that her stepmother was coming. "Ah," said she to herself, "what joy it would be to live here, and be no longer tormented as I am now!" She was, however, obliged to go, and tell her stepmother that the castle was finished.

"I will just go and see for myself," she said, and, rising from her seat, she followed the maiden; but, on entering the castle, the brightness and glitter so dazzled her, that she was obliged to cover her eyes with her hand. "You see how easy this is to you," she said; "ah, yes, I ought to have given you something still more difficult."

She went into all the rooms, prying into every corner, to see if she could not find something wrong or defective; but this was impossible. "I will go downstairs," she said at last, looking at her stepdaughter maliciously; "it is necessary for me to examine kitchens and cellars also, and if you have forgotten one single thing, you shall not escape punishment." But nothing was wanting: the fire burned on the hearth, the supper was boiling in the saucepan; brooms, brushes, fenders, fire irons, were in their proper places, and the walls and shelves were covered with brass and copper, glass and china, which glittered in the lamplight:—nothing was wanting, not even the coal scuttle, or the water-can.

"Where are the steps to the cellar?" cried the woman; "I want to see if the casks are full of wine of the right sort, or it will be bad for you."

She raised the trap door as she spoke, and descended the stairs leading to the cellars; but scarcely had she taken two steps, when the heavy door, which was not pushed back far enough, fell to with a dreadful crash. The maiden heard a scream, and followed as quickly as she could to help her unkind stepmother, but having been struck by the door, she had fallen to the bottom of the steps, and there the maiden found her lying dead.

After this the beautiful castle belonged alone to the maiden, who hardly knew, at first, how to understand such good fortune. But after a while servants came to wait upon her, and they found in the drawers and wardrobes beautiful dresses, in which she could array herself. There was also a large chest filled with gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, so that she had not a single wish ungratified.

It was not long before the fame of her beauty and riches got known

throughout the world, and the maiden had soon plenty of lovers. But she did not care to accept any of them, till at last a prince, the son of a great king, came to see her. He was the first to touch her heart, and she very soon learned to love him dearly.

One day, as they sat talking under a linden tree in the castle garden, the prince said, very sadly, "My heart's love, I must leave you to get my father's consent to our marriage, but I will not stay away long."

"Be true to me," said the maiden, as she took a sorrowful farewell of him.

But when the prince reached home, he found that the king, who did not want him to marry this maiden, had invited many beautiful ladies to his court, and for a time the prince forgot his true bride and the wonderful castle.

One day, while he was riding to the hunt on a beautiful horse, an old woman met him, and asked him for alms. As he drew rein to help her, she said, in a low tone, "The maiden weeps for her false lover under the linden tree."

In a moment the power which had changed his heart towards her was at an end. He turned away and rode quickly to the castle in the valley, which the good fairy had built. When he reached the gates, all looked dark and gloomy, and there, under the linden tree, stood his forsaken bride, looking sad and mournful. He alighted quickly from his horse, and, advancing towards her, he exclaimed, "Forgive me, dearest. I am come back, and we will never, never part again."

No sooner had he uttered these words, than the most brilliant lights shone from the castle windows. Around him on the grass glittered innumerable glowworms. On the steps bloomed lovely flowers, and from the rooms came the song of joyous birds, arrayed in plumage of bright and beautiful colors.

He took the maiden by the hand and led her in. The large hall was full of the castle household, who had assembled, and the priest stood in readiness to marry them. The prince hastened forward, leading the bride who had suffered so much from her stepmother, and been so true to her lover; and she became at last his wife, to the great joy of the castle and its inmates.

THE KING OF THE BIRDS

IN OLDEN TIMES, every sound in nature had a sense and significance of some sort. When the hammer of the smith sounded, it was as if it said: "How I strike! How I strike!" The sound of the plane on the

table said, "I scratch, I scratch." The rush of the water over the mill wheel had a meaning, and if the miller was a cheat, it seemed to say sometimes, "Who cheats? who cheats?" and at others to reply, "The miller, the miller"; and when the mill went very fast, "Stealing six out of eight! Stealing six out of eight!"

In these good old days, also, the birds had a language of their own, which everyone could understand, although it sounded only like twittering, screaming, and whistling, and was really music without words. About this time an idea arose among the birds that they would be no longer without a master, and they determined to elect one of their number to be king. One voice only was raised against this proposal; the plover declared that he had lived free and he would die free. Full of anxiety, he flew about here and there among the birds, crying, "Don't believe it! Don't believe it!" But as no one noticed him, he returned to his lonely home in the marshes, and has never since associated with his own species.

The birds meanwhile were determined to have a general meeting on the subject, so one fine May morning they assembled in great numbers from woods, fields, and meadows. The eagle and the bullfinch, the owl and the crow, the lark and the sparrow, and many more that could be named; even the cuckoo was present, and the lapwing—who is called the cuckoo's clerk, because he lets his note be heard just after him—and a great number of little birds, as well as one without a name who also mixed with the flock.

A hen, who, as it happened, had heard nothing of the whole matter, wondered greatly at such a large gathering. "Cluck, cluck, cluck! what are they all going to do?" she cackled. But the cock quieted his dear wife, and telling her not to make such a noise, he explained what the birds were about.

Meanwhile the assembly had decided that the bird who could fly the highest should be chosen as king. A green frog who sat in the bushes, when he heard this, croaked dreadfully, and said there would be many tears shed over that arrangement. The crow, however, said, "Caw, caw," for he wished it to be all settled in a friendly manner. They decided to make the experiment of flying the next morning, so that none should be able to say afterwards, "I could have flown higher had it not been evening, and I was too tired to do any more."

Next morning, at the appointed signal, the whole flock rose in the air. There was quite a cloud of dust scattered about, and such a rustling noise and flapping of wings; it was as if a dark cloud had passed over the sun. The little birds, however, remained among the branches; they could not attempt such great flights. The large birds kept up for

a long time; but none could compete with the eagle, for he went so high that if they had followed him, the sun would have put out their eyes.

When the eagle saw that the others could not follow him, he thought to himself, "I need not go any higher; I am sure to be chosen king."

And the birds beneath him cried out, "You must be our king; none can fly as high as you do."

"Excepting I," cried the little fellow without a name, who had crept unseen among the wing feathers of the eagle, and mounted with him, and as he was not tired, he flew in the air still higher and higher till he could almost peep into heaven. When he had reached this height, he folded his wings together and sunk gradually down to earth, exclaiming in his shrill but delicate voice, "I am king—I am king!"

"You our king?" cried the birds, in a rage: "no, no; you have gained your position through trickery and cunning!"

However, they were obliged to make another condition about who should be king, and they decided that it should be he who sunk lowest into the earth after his flight in the air. The goose on this cackled loudly and laid her broad breast on the ground; the cock scratched away quickly to make a hole; the duck, however, got into trouble for she jumped into an open grave, and sprained her leg so terribly that she was obliged to waddle away to the nearest pond with the cry, "Rare work, rare work!"

The little bird without a name, however, went in search of a mouse-hole, and as he slipped in, he cried with his shrill voice, "I am king—I am king!"

"You our king!" cried the other birds, in a rage. "Do you suppose your cunning tricks can obtain you that honor?" So they shut him up and made him a prisoner in the mouse-hole, hoping he might be starved, and the owl was placed sentinel to prevent the little rogue from escaping, however dear his life might be to him.

In the evening, all the birds felt very tired with the great efforts they had made in flying, so they all went home with their wives and children to bed. The owl alone remained by the mouse-hole, staring into it with her great, grave eyes; but at length she also became tired, and said to herself, "I can easily shut one eye, and if I keep the other open, the little wretch shall not escape." She closed one eye, and with the other kept a steadfast look on the mouse-hole.

The little fellow peeped out once or twice, and thought, as the owl appeared asleep, that he could slip away; but the owl saw him, and made such a quick step forward that he darted back in a hurry. A little while after, the owl thought she would rest one eye and open the other,

and so keep on changing all night; but when she closed one, she forgot to open the other, and very soon both eyes were shut up, and she was fast asleep.

The little one again peeped out, and saw that now he could easily escape, so he slipped cautiously from the hole and flew away. From that time the owl has never dared to show herself by daylight, lest the other birds should peck off her feathers and pull her to pieces; so she flies about in the night time, and pursues and catches the mice who can make such dangerous holes. And the little bird also keeps out of her way, for he fears she will catch him by the neck and soon make an end of him. He lives in the hedges and builds his nest there, and is constantly crying out, in a piping voice, "I am king, I am king!" The other birds, therefore, call him in mockery the *hedge king*.*

No one, however, was more pleased at not having to obey the hedge king than the lark. The moment she caught a sight of the sun, she would rise in the air to a great height, singing, "Ah, where is that beauty?—that is a beauty!—beauty, beauty!—ah, where is that beauty?"

THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD

A POOR WOOD-CUTTER lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut on the borders of a lonely forest. One morning, when he was going to his work, he said to his wife: "Send my eldest daughter out into the forest with my dinner at noon. I shall be quite ready for it, and, that she may not lose her way, I will take a bag of millet with me, and strew the seeds on the path."

As soon as the sun had reached the meridian, and was shining over the wood, the maiden started on her road with a large jug of soup and some bread for her father's dinner. But the field and hedge sparrows, the larks, the finches, and other birds, had long before picked up the seeds, so that the maiden could not find the track.

Fortunately, she went forward in the right direction, yet the sun went down, and night came on before she could find shelter. The trees rustled in the darkness, the night owl screamed, and the poor girl was in great fear, when all at once she saw a light twinkling in the distance through the trees. "There must be people living yonder," she thought, "and no doubt they will give me a night's lodging."

* *Zaune König*, the German for wren and hedge sparrow.

She turned her steps toward the light, and very soon came to a house through the window of which the light shone.

She knocked at the door, and a rough voice cried from within, "Come in." She stepped into a narrow dark hall and tapped at the room door, the same voice cried "Come in," and when the door opened she saw a very old man sitting at a table; his chin rested on his hands, and his white beard fell over it nearly to the ground. Near the stove lay three animals—a cock, a hen, and a speckled cow. The maiden told the old man of her trouble, and asked if she could have a night's lodging. Instead of answering her the old man turned to the animals and said:

*"Little chicks and spotted cow,
Shall we keep her here or no?"*

The animals made certain sounds which meant that she was to stay. So the old man said: "You will find plenty of everything here, so go into the kitchen and cook us some supper."

The maiden found an abundance of all she wanted, and after cooking a dish full of good food she placed it on the table, and seating herself with the old man ate a hearty meal, but she never thought of the animals. When she was satisfied she said: "I am very tired, where is a bed on which I can sleep?" In reply, came a voice--

*"You can eat and drink,
But you cannot think
Of poor animals such as we;
You shall have a bed,
Just to rest your head,
But you don't know where it will be."*

The maiden scarcely noticed what the voice said, for the old man told her to go upstairs, where she would find two rooms, with a bed in each; she was to shake the beds well, and make them both. The young maiden went quickly upstairs, made her own bed, and without thinking of one for the old man, she lay down and went fast asleep. After a while the old man came up to his room, and finding his bed not made shook his head, and going into the room where the maiden lay sleeping, opened a trap door in the floor, and let down the bed on which she lay into the cellar beneath.

Meanwhile, the wood-cutter returned home in the evening very late, and reproached his wife for having left him the whole day hungry. "It is not my fault," she said, "I sent the maiden with your dinner at noon, and I suppose she must have lost her way, she will be back again tomorrow, no doubt."

Before day, however, the wood-cutter was obliged to be off to the forest, and he desired his wife to send his second daughter with his

dinner: "I will carry a bag of linseed with me this time," he said; "as the seeds are larger than the millet, she will see them more easily, and will not be likely to lose her way."

But at noon when the maiden went with her father's dinner, the linseed had disappeared; the birds of the forest, as on the day before, had picked them all up, so that there were none left. She also wandered about all day, and at last found a good supper and a night's lodging in the old man's cottage; but she also never thought of feeding the animals, or of making the old man's bed, so at night while she slept, he opened the trap door and let her down into the cellar below as he had done her sister. On the third morning, the wood-cutter told his wife: "You must send our youngest child with my dinner today, she is always good and obedient, she will not lose her way as her sisters have done; they wander about like wild bees when they swarm."

The mother, however, would not listen. "No," she said, "why should I lose my dearest child now that the others are gone?"

"Don't fear," he said, "the maiden will never wander, she is too clever and sensible; besides, I will take a quantity of peas with me and strew them in the way, to show her the right path; they are so much larger than linseed, and will be sure to remain."

So the next day, the mother, with much advice and caution, sent her youngest daughter to the forest. She carried a basket on her arm, but there were no peas to guide her, they were all in the crops of the pigeons, and therefore she knew not which path to take. She was very unhappy, and thought how hungry her poor father would be, and how her mother would fret if she remained away all night. However, in her wanderings after dark, she also saw the light, and came, as her sisters had done, to the house in the wood. She went in and begged for a night's lodging so gently that the man with the white beard said to his animals:

*"Little chicks and spotted cow,
Shall we keep her here or no?"*

The voice answered, "Yes," and presently the maiden went over to the stove where the animals lay, stroked the smooth feathers of the cock and hen with her hand, and rubbed the spotted cow between the horns. When the old man told her to go and cook some supper she got it ready very quickly, but when she placed the dishes on the table she said: "I am not going to feast myself with all these good things while the poor animals have nothing. There will be plenty left for me, and I shall take care of them first."

Then she went and fetched some barley which she scattered before the chickens, and a whole armful of sweet hay for the cow. "Eat that

up, you dear animals," she said, "and perhaps you are thirsty, so I will bring you some fresh water."

Then she brought in a large basin of water, and the cock and hen sprung on the brink, dipped in their beaks and lifted their heads in the manner that birds always do drink, while the spotted cow took a long draught. After the animals were fed, the maiden seated herself at the table and ate what the old man had left for her. In a very little while the fowls had their heads behind their wings, and the cow began to blink her eyes, so the maiden said: "Shall we not go to rest?"

And the old man cried—

*"Little chicks and spotted cow,
Shall we let her sleep here now?"*

And they replied quickly—

*"Yes, for she is very good,
She has brought us drink and food."*

Then the maiden went upstairs, shook both beds, and made them up, and presently the old man came to his room, and when he laid himself on the bed his white beard nearly reached to his feet.

The maiden also said her prayers, and lying down slept peacefully till midnight, when a number of strange noises awoke her. The corners of the house were creaking and cracking, the doors sprang open and struck against the walls. The rafters groaned, as if their joints were broken and separated; the stairs were turning upside down, and at last there was a crash, as if the roof and the walls had fallen in together. Then all was still.

The maiden had been too frightened to move, and all had happened so quickly that she would have had scarcely time to do so. But now finding she was not hurt, and still in her comfortable bed, she lay quiet and went to sleep again.

But in the morning when the bright sunshine awoke her, what a sight met her eyes! She was lying in a noble room, and everything around her as splendid as the furniture of a royal palace. The walls were covered with golden flowers on a silken ground. The bed was of ivory, and the covering of red velvet, and on a chair near it stood a pair of slippers embroidered with pearls.

The maiden fancied herself in a dream, but while she wondered three neatly dressed servants came in, and asked her what they could do for her?

"Nothing," she replied, "only go away, and I will get up and cook the old man's breakfast for him, and give those dear animals their food."

She dressed herself quickly, and went to the old man's room; but what was her astonishment to see lying on the bed a strange man, asleep. While she stood and saw with surprise that he was young and handsome, he woke, raised himself, and said, "Don't go away, I am a king's son, and a wicked witch changed me into a bearded, gray old man. My castle was changed into the wooden house, and my servants into a cock, a hen and a spotted cow. The spell was never to be broken unless a maiden came to visit us who had a kind heart, and who was as careful to feed poor animals as human beings, and you are that maiden. And at midnight, while we slept, we were all through you set free, the old wooden house is again a royal castle, and the animals are restored to their former shape as my servants. I will now send them to fetch your father and mother, that they may be present at our marriage, for you are to be my wife."

"But where are my sisters?" she asked.

"I have shut them up in the cellar," he replied; "but tomorrow I will send them to work in the mines till they have learned that animals require to be fed and kindly treated, as well as human beings."

THE DEVIL WITH THE THREE GOLDEN HAIRS

THERE WAS ONCE a poor woman who gave birth to a little son; and as he came into the world with a caul on, it was predicted that in his fourteenth year he would have the King's daughter for his wife. It happened that soon afterwards the King came into the village, and no one knew that he was the King, and when he asked the people what news there was, they answered, "A child has just been born with a caul on; whatever anyone so born undertakes turns out well. It is prophesied, too, that in his fourteenth year he will have the King's daughter for his wife."

The King, who had a bad heart, and was angry about the prophecy, went to the parents, and seeming quite friendly, said, "You poor people, let me have your child, and I will take care of it." At first they refused, but when the stranger offered them a large amount of gold for it, and they thought, "It is a luck-child, and everything must turn out well for it," they at last consented, and gave him the child.

The King put it in a box and rode away with it until he came to a deep piece of water; then he threw the box into it and thought, "I have freed my daughter from her unlooked-for suitor."

The box, however, did not sink, but floated like a boat, and not a drop

of water made its way into it. And it floated to within two miles of the King's chief city, where there was a mill, and it came to a stand-still at the mill-dam. A miller's boy, who by good luck was standing there, noticed it and pulled it out with a hook, thinking that he had found a great treasure, but when he opened it there lay a pretty boy inside, quite fresh and lively. He took him to the miller and his wife, and as they had no children they were glad, and said, "God has given him to us." They took great care of the foundling, and he grew up in all goodness.

It happened that once in a storm the King went into the mill, and he asked the mill-folk if the tall youth was their son. "No," answered they, "he's a foundling. Fourteen years ago he floated down to the mill-dam in a box, and the mill-boy pulled him out of the water."

Then the King knew that it was none other than the luck-child which he had thrown into the water, and he said, "My good people, could not the youth take a letter to the Queen; I will give him two gold pieces as a reward?" "Just as the King commands," answered they, and they told the boy to hold himself in readiness. Then the King wrote a letter to the Queen, wherein he said, "As soon as the boy arrives with this letter, let him be killed and buried, and all must be done before I come home."

The boy set out with this letter; but he lost his way, and in the evening came to a large forest. In the darkness he saw a small light; he went towards it and reached a cottage. When he went in, an old woman was sitting by the fire quite alone. She started when she saw the boy, and said, "Whence do you come, and whither are you going?" "I come from the mill," he answered, "and wish to go to the Queen, to whom I am taking a letter; but as I have lost my way in the forest I should like to stay here over night." "You poor boy," said the woman, "you have come into a den of thieves, and when they come home they will kill you." "Let them come," said the boy, "I am not afraid; but I am so tired that I cannot go any farther": and he stretched himself upon a bench and fell asleep.

Soon afterwards the robbers came, and angrily asked what strange boy was lying there? "Ah," said the old woman, "it is an innocent child who has lost himself in the forest, and out of pity I have let him come in; he has to take a letter to the Queen." The robbers opened the letter and read it, and in it was written that the boy as soon as he arrived should be put to death. Then the hardhearted robbers felt pity, and their leader tore up the letter and wrote another, saying that soon as the boy came, he should be married at once to the King's daughter. Then they let him lie quietly on the bench until the next morning,

and when he awoke they gave him the letter, and showed him the right way.

And the Queen, when she had received the letter and read it, did as was written in it, and had a splendid wedding-feast prepared, and the King's daughter was married to the luck-child; and as the youth was handsome and agreeable she lived with him in joy and contentment.

After some time the King returned to his palace and saw that the prophecy was fulfilled, and the luck-child married to his daughter. "How has that come to pass?" said he; "I gave quite another order in my letter."

So the Queen gave him the letter, and said that he might see for himself what was written in it. The King read the letter and saw quite well that it had been exchanged for the other. He asked the youth what had become of the letter entrusted to him, and why he had brought another instead of it. "I know nothing about it," answered he; "it must have been changed in the night, when I slept in the forest." The King said in a passion, "You shall not have everything quite so much your own way; whosoever marries my daughter must fetch me from Hell three golden hairs from the head of the devil; bring me what I want, and you shall keep my daughter." In this way the King hoped to be rid of him forever. But the luck-child answered, "I will fetch the golden hairs, I am not afraid of the Devil"; thereupon he took leave of them and began his journey.

The road led him to a large town, where the watchman by the gates asked him what his trade was, and what he knew. "I know everything," answered the luck-child. "Then you can do us a favor," said the watchman, "if you will tell us why our market fountain, which once flowed with wine, has become dry, and no longer gives even water?" "That you shall know," answered he; "only wait until I come back."

Then he went farther and came to another town, and there also the gatekeeper asked him what was his trade, and what he knew. "I know everything," answered he. "Then you can do us a favor, and tell us why a tree in our town which once bore golden apples now does not even put forth leaves?" "You shall know that," answered he; "only wait until I come back."

Then he went on and came to a wide river over which he must go. The ferryman asked him what his trade was, and what he knew. "I know everything," answered he. "Then you can do me a favor," said the ferryman, "and tell me why I must always be rowing backwards and forwards, and am never set free?" "You shall know that," answered he; "only wait until I come back."

When he had crossed the water he found the entrance to Hell. It

was black and sooty within, and the devil was not at home, but his grandmother was sitting in a large armchair. "What do you want?" said she to him, but she did not look so very wicked. "I should like to have three golden hairs from the devil's head," answered he, "else I cannot keep my wife." "That is a good deal to ask for," said she; "if the devil comes home and finds you, it will cost you your life; but as I pity you, I will see if I cannot help you."

She changed him into an ant and said, "Creep into the folds of my dress, you will be safe there." "Yes," answered he, "so far, so good; but there are three things besides that I want to know: why a fountain which once flowed with wine has become dry, and no longer gives even water; why a tree which once bore golden apples does not even put forth leaves; and why a ferryman must always be going backwards and forwards, and is never set free?"

"Those are difficult questions," answered she, "but only be silent and quiet and pay attention to what the devil says when I pull out the three golden hairs."

As the evening came on the devil returned home. No sooner had he entered than he noticed that the air was not pure. "I smell man's flesh," said he; "all is not right here." Then he pried into every corner, and searched, but could not find anything. His grandmother scolded him. "It has just been swept," said she, "and everything put in order, and now you are upsetting it again; you have always got man's flesh in your nose. Sit down and eat your supper."

When he had eaten and drunk he was tired, and laid his head in his grandmother's lap, and before long he was fast asleep, snoring and breathing heavily. Then the old woman took hold of a golden hair, pulled it out, and laid it down near her. "Oh!" cried the devil, "what are you doing?" "I have had a bad dream," answered the grandmother, "so I seized hold of your hair." "What did you dream then?" said the devil. "I dreamed that a fountain in a market-place from which wine once flowed was dried up, and not even water would flow out of it; what is the cause of it?" "Oh, ho! if they did not know it," answered the devil; "there is a toad sitting under a stone in the well; if they killed it, the wine would flow again."

He went to sleep again and snored until the windows shook. Then she pulled the second hair out. "Ha! what are you doing?" cried the devil angrily. "Do not take it ill," said she. "I did it in a dream." "What have you dreamed this time?" asked he. "I dreamed that in a certain kingdom there stood an apple tree which had once borne golden apples, but now would not even bear leaves. What, think you, was the reason?" "Oh! if they did but know," answered the devil. "A mouse is gnawing at the root; if they killed this they would have golden apples

again, but if it gnaws much longer the tree will wither altogether. But leave me alone with your dreams: if you disturb me in my sleep again you will get a box on the ear."

The grandmother spoke gently to him until he fell asleep again and snored. Then she took hold of the third golden hair and pulled it out. The devil jumped up, roared out, and would have treated her ill, but she quieted him once more and said, "Who can help bad dreams?" "What was the dream, then?" asked he, and was quite curious. "I dreamed of a ferryman who complained that he must always ferry from one side to the other, and was never released. What is the cause of it?" "Ah! the fool," answered the devil; "when anyone comes and wants to go across he must put the oar in his hand, and the other man will have to ferry and he will be free." As the grandmother had plucked out the three golden hairs, and the three questions were answered, she let the old serpent alone, and he slept until daybreak.

When the devil had gone out again the old woman took the ant out of the folds of her dress, and gave the luck-child his human shape again. "There are the three golden hairs for you," said she. "What the devil said to your three questions; I suppose you heard?" "Yes," answered he, "I heard, and will take care to remember." "You have what you want," said she, "and now you can go your way." He thanked the old woman for helping him in his need, and left Hell well content that everything had turned out so fortunately.

When he came to the ferryman he was expected to give the promised answer. "Ferry me across first," said the luck-child, "and then I will tell you how you can be set free," and when he had reached the opposite shore he gave him the devil's advice: "Next time anyone comes, who wants to be ferried over, just put the oar in his hand."

He went on and came to the town wherein stood the unfruitful tree, and there too the watchman wanted an answer. So he told him what he had heard from the devil: "Kill the mouse which is gnawing at its root, and it will again bear golden apples." Then the watchman thanked him, and gave him as a reward two asses laden with gold, which followed him.

At last he came to the town whose well was dry. He told the watchman what the devil had said: "A toad is in the well beneath a stone; you must find it and kill it, and the well will again give wine in plenty." The watchman thanked him, and also gave him two asses laden with gold.

At last the luck-child got home to his wife, who was heartily glad to see him again, and to hear how well he had prospered in everything. To the King he took what he had asked for, the devil's three golden hairs, and when the King saw the four asses laden with gold he was

quite content, and said, "Now all the conditions are fulfilled, and you can keep my daughter. But tell me, dear son-in-law, where did all that gold come from? this is tremendous wealth!" "I was rowed across a river," answered he, "and got it there; it lies on the shore instead of sand." "Can I too fetch some of it?" said the King; and he was quite eager about it. "As much as you like," answered he. "There is a ferryman on the river; let him ferry you over, and you can fill your sacks on the other side." The greedy King set out in all haste, and when he came to the river he beckoned to the ferryman to put him across. The ferryman came and bade him get in, and when they got to the other shore he put the oar in his hand and sprang out. But from this time forth the King had to ferry, as a punishment for his sins. Perhaps he is ferrying still? If he is, it is because no one has taken the oar from him.

OUR LADY'S CHILD

HARD BY a great forest dwelt a wood-cutter with his wife, who had an only child, a little girl three years old. They were, however, so poor that they no longer had daily bread, and did not know how to get food for her. One morning the wood-cutter went out sorrowfully to his work in the forest, and while he was cutting wood, suddenly there stood before him a tall and beautiful woman with a crown of shining stars on her head, who said to him, "I am the Virgin Mary, mother of the child Jesus. You are poor and needy, bring your child to me, I will take her with me and be her mother, and care for her." The wood-cutter obeyed, brought his child, and gave her to the Virgin Mary, who took her up to heaven with her. There the child fared well, ate sugar-cakes, and drank sweet milk, and her clothes were of gold, and the little angels played with her. And when she was fourteen years of age, the Virgin Mary called her one day and said, "Dear child. I am about to make a long journey, so take into your keeping the keys of the thirteen doors of heaven. Twelve of these you may open, and behold the glory which is within them, but the thirteenth, to which this little key belongs, is forbidden you. Beware of opening it, or you will bring misery on yourself." The girl promised to be obedient, and when the Virgin Mary was gone, she began to examine the dwellings of the kingdom of heaven. Each day she opened one of them, until she had made the round of the twelve. In each of them sat one of the Apostles in the midst of a great light, and she rejoiced in all the magnificence and splendor, and the little angels who always accompanied her rejoiced with her.

Then the forbidden door alone remained, and she felt a great desire to know what could be hidden behind it, and said to the angels, "I will not quite open it, and I will not go inside it, but I will unlock it so that we can just see a little through the opening." "Oh, no," said the little angels, "that would be a sin. The Virgin Mary has forbidden it, and it might easily cause your unhappiness." Then she was silent, but the desire in her heart was not stilled, but gnawed there and tormented her, and let her have no rest. And once when the angels had all gone out, she thought, "Now I am quite alone, and I could peep in. If I do it, no one will ever know." She sought out the key, and when she had got it in her hand, she put it in the lock, and when she had put it in, she turned it round as well. Then the door sprang open, and she saw there the Trinity sitting in fire and splendor. She stayed there awhile, and looked at everything in amazement; then she touched the light a little with her finger, and her finger became quite golden. Immediately a great fear fell on her. She shut the door violently, and ran away. Her terror too would not quit her, let her do what she might, and her heart beat continually and would not be still; the gold too stayed on her finger, and would not go away, let her rub it and wash it ever so much.

It was not long before the Virgin Mary came back from her journey. She called the girl before her, and asked to have the keys of heaven back. When the maiden gave her the bunch, the Virgin looked into her eyes and said, "Have you not opened the thirteenth door also?" "No," she replied. Then she laid her hand on the girl's heart, and felt how it beat and beat, and saw right well that she had disobeyed her order and had opened the door. Then she said once again, "Are you certain that you have not done it?" "Yes," said the girl, for the second time. Then she perceived the finger which had become golden from touching the fire of heaven, and saw well that the child had sinned, and said for the third time, "Have you not done it?" "No," said the girl for the third time. Then said the Virgin Mary, "You have not obeyed me, and besides that you have lied, you are no longer worthy to be in heaven."

Then the girl fell into a deep sleep, and when she awoke she lay on the earth below, and in the midst of a wilderness. She wanted to cry out, but she could bring forth no sound. She sprang up and wanted to run away, but wherever she turned herself, she was continually held back by thick hedges of thorns through which she could not break. In the desert, in which she was imprisoned, there stood an old hollow tree, and this had to be her dwelling place. Into this she crept when night came, and here she slept. Here, too, she found a shelter from storm and rain, but it was a miserable life, and bitterly did she weep when she remembered how happy she had been in heaven. and how

the angels had played with her. Roots and wild berries were her only food, and for these she sought as far as she could go. In the autumn she picked up the fallen nuts and leaves, and carried them into the hole. The nuts were her food in winter, and when snow and ice came, she crept among the leaves like a poor little animal that she might not freeze. Before long her clothes were all torn, and one bit of them after another fell off her. As soon, however, as the sun shone warm again, she went out and sat in front of the tree, and her long hair covered her on all sides like a mantle. Thus she sat year after year, and felt the pain and misery of the world. One day, when the trees were once more clothed in fresh green, the King of the country was hunting in the forest, and followed a roe, and as it had fled into the thicket which shut in this bit of the forest, he got off his horse, tore the bushes asunder, and cut himself a path with his sword. When he had at last forced his way through, he saw a wonderfully beautiful maiden sitting under the tree; and she sat there and was entirely covered with her golden hair down to her very feet. He stood still and looked at her full of surprise, then he spoke to her and said, "Who are you? Why are you sitting here in the wilderness?" But she gave no answer, for she could not open her mouth. The King continued, "Will you go with me to my castle?" Then she just nodded her head a little. The King took her in his arms, carried her to his horse, and rode home with her, and when he reached the royal castle he caused her to be dressed in beautiful garments, and gave her all things in abundance. Although she could not speak, she was still so beautiful and charming that he began to love her with all his heart, and it was not long before he married her.

After a year or so had passed, the Queen brought a son into the world. Thereupon the Virgin Mary appeared to her in the night when she lay in her bed alone, and said, "If you will tell the truth and confess that you did unlock the forbidden door, I will open your mouth and give you back your speech, but if you persevere in your sin, and deny obstinately, I will take your new-born child away with me." Then the Queen was permitted to answer, but she remained hard, and said, "No, I did not open the forbidden door"; and the Virgin Mary took the new-born child from her arms, and vanished with it. Next morning, when the child was not to be found, it was whispered among the people that the Queen was a man-eater, and had killed her own child. She heard all this and could say nothing to the contrary, but the King would not believe it, for he loved her so much.

When a year had gone by the Queen again bore a son, and in the night the Virgin Mary again came to her, and said, "If you will confess that you opened the forbidden door, I will give you your child back and untie your tongue; but if you continue in sin and deny it, I will

take away with me this new child also." Then the Queen again said, "No, I did not open the forbidden door"; and the Virgin took the child out of her arms, and away with her to heaven. Next morning, when this child also had disappeared, the people declared quite loudly that the Queen had devoured it, and the King's councilors demanded that she should be brought to justice. The King, however, loved her so dearly that he would not believe it, and commanded the councilors under pain of death not to say any more about it.

The following year the Queen gave birth to a beautiful little daughter, and for the third time the Virgin Mary appeared to her in the night and said, "Follow me." She took the Queen by the hand and led her to heaven, and showed her there her two eldest children, who smiled at her, and were playing with the ball of the world. When the Queen rejoiced, the Virgin Mary said, "Is your heart not yet softened? If you will own that you opened the forbidden door, I will give you back your two little sons." But for the third time the Queen answered, "No, I did not open the forbidden door." Then the Virgin let her sink down to earth once more, and took from her likewise her third child.

Next morning, when the loss was reported abroad, all the people cried loudly, "The Queen is a man-eater! She must be judged," and the King was no longer able to restrain his councilors. Thereupon a trial was held, and as she could not answer, and defend herself, she was condemned to be burned alive. The wood was got together, and when she was fast bound to the stake, and the fire began to burn round about her, the hard ice of pride melted, her heart was moved by repentance, and she thought, "If I could but confess before my death that I opened the door." Then her voice came back to her, and she cried out loudly, "Yes, Mary, I did it"; and straightway rain fell from the sky and extinguished the flames of fire, and a light broke forth above her, and the Virgin Mary descended with the two little sons by her side, and the new-born daughter in her arms. She spoke kindly to her, and said, "He who repents his sin and acknowledges it, is forgiven." Then she gave her the three children, untied her tongue, and granted her happiness for her whole life.

THE WONDERFUL MUSICIAN

THERE WAS once a wonderful musician, who went quite alone through a forest and thought of all manner of things, and when nothing was left for him to think about, he said to himself, "Time

is beginning to pass heavily with me here in the forest, I will fetch hither a good companion for myself." Then he took his fiddle from his back, and played so that it echoed through the trees. It was not long before a wolf came trotting through the thicket toward him. "Ah, here is a wolf coming! I have no desire for him!" said the musician; but the wolf came nearer and said to him, "Ah, dear musician, how beautifully you play! I should like to learn that, too." "It is soon learned," the musician replied, "you have only to do all that I bid you." "Oh, musician," said the wolf, "I will obey you as a scholar obeys his master." The musician bade him follow, and when they had gone part of the way together, they came to an old oak tree which was hollow inside, and cleft in the middle. "Look," said the musician, "if you will learn to fiddle, put your forepaws into this crevice." The wolf obeyed, but the musician quickly picked up a stone and with one blow wedged his two paws so fast that he was forced to stay there like a prisoner. "Stay there until I come back again," said the musician, and went his way.

After a while he again said to himself, "Time is beginning to pass heavily with me here in the forest, I will fetch hither another companion," and took his fiddle and again played in the forest. It was not long before a fox came creeping through the trees towards him. "Ah there's a fox coming!" said the musician. "I have no desire for him." The fox came up to him and said, "Oh, dear musician, how beautifully you play! I should like to learn that, too." "That is soon learned," said the musician. "You have only to do everything that I bid you." "Oh, musician," then said the fox, "I will obey you as a scholar obeys his master." "Follow me," said the musician; and when they had walked a part of the way, they came to a footpath, with high bushes on both sides of it. There the musician stood still, and from one side bent a young hazel bush down to the ground, and put his foot on the top of it, then he bent down a young tree from the other side as well, and said, "Now, little fox, if you will learn something, give me your left front paw." The fox obeyed, and the musician fastened his paw to the left bough. "Little fox," said he, "now reach me your right paw," and he tied it to the right bough. When he had examined whether they were firm enough, he let go, and the bushes sprang up again, and jerked up the little fox, so that it hung struggling in the air. "Wait there till I come back again," said the musician, and went his way.

Again he said to himself, "Time is beginning to pass heavily with me here in the forest, I will fetch hither another companion," so he took his fiddle, and the sound echoed through the forest. Then a little hare came springing towards him. "Why, a hare is coming," said the musician, "I do not want him." "Ah, dear musician," said the hare,

"how beautifully you play the fiddle; I, too, should like to learn that." "That is soon learned," said the musician, "you have only to do everything that I bid you."

"Oh, musician," replied the little hare, "I will obey you as a scholar obeys his master." They went a part of the way together until they came to an open space in the forest, where stood an aspen tree. The musician tied a long string round the little hare's neck, the other end of which he fastened to the tree. "Now briskly, little hare, run twenty times round the tree!" cried the musician, and the little hare obeyed, and when it had run round twenty times, it had twisted the string twenty times round the trunk of the tree, and the little hare was caught, and let it pull and tug as it liked, it only made the string cut into its tender neck. "Wait there till I come back," said the musician, and went onward.

The wolf, in the meantime, had pushed and pulled and bitten at the stone, and had worked so long that he had set his feet at liberty and had drawn them once more out of the cleft. Full of anger and rage he hurried after the musician and wanted to tear him to pieces. When the fox saw him running, he began to lament, and cried with all his might, "Brother wolf, come to my help, the musician has betrayed me!" The wolf drew down the little tree, bit the cord in two, and freed the fox, who went with him to take revenge on the musician. They found the tied-up hare, whom likewise they delivered, and then they all sought the enemy together.

The musician had once more played his fiddle as he went on his way, and this time he had been more fortunate. The sound reached the ears of a poor wood-cutter, who instantly, whether he would or no, gave up his work and came with his hatchet under his arm to listen to the music. "At last comes the right companion," said the musician, "for I was seeking a human being, and no wild beast." And he began and played so beautifully and delightfully that the poor man stood there as if bewitched, and his heart leaped with gladness. And as he thus stood, the wolf, the fox, and the hare came up, and he saw well that they had some evil design. So he raised his glittering axe and placed himself before the musician, as if to say, "Whoever wishes to touch him let him beware, for he will have to do with me!" Then the beasts were terrified and ran back into the forest. The musician, however, played once more to the man out of gratitude, and then went onward.

BROTHER AND SISTER

LITTLE BROTHER took his little sister by the hand and said, "Since our mother died we have had no happiness; our stepmother beats us every day, and if we come near her she kicks us away with her foot. Our meals are the hard crusts of bread that are left over; and the little dog under the table is better off, for she often throws it a nice bit. May Heaven pity us. If our mother only knew! Come, we will go forth together into the wide world."

They walked the whole day over meadows, fields, and stony places; and when it rained the little sister said, "Heaven and our hearts are weeping together." In the evening they came to a large forest, and they were so weary with sorrow and hunger and the long walk, that they lay down in a hollow tree and fell asleep.

The next day when they awoke, the sun was already high in the sky, and shone down hot into the tree. Then the brother said, "Sister, I am thirsty; if I knew of a little brook I would go and just take a drink; I think I hear one running." The brother got up and took the little sister by the hand, and they set off to find the brook.

But the wicked stepmother was a witch, and had seen how the two children had gone away, and had crept after them stealthily, as witches do creep, and had bewitched all the brooks in the forest.

Now when they found a little brook leaping brightly over the stones, the brother was going to drink out of it, but the sister heard how it said as it ran, "Who drinks of me will be a tiger; who drinks of me will be a tiger." Then the sister cried, "Pray, dear brother, do not drink, or you will become a wild beast, and tear me to pieces." The brother did not drink, although he was so thirsty, but said, "I will wait for the next spring."

When they came to the next brook the sister heard this also say, "Who drinks of me will be a wolf; who drinks of me will be a wolf." Then the sister cried out, "Pray, dear brother, do not drink, or you will become a wolf, and devour me." The brother did not drink, and said, "I will wait until we come to the next spring, but then I must drink, say what you like; for my thirst is too great."

And when they came to the third brook the sister heard how it said as it ran, "Who drinks of me will be a roebuck; who drinks of me will be a roebuck." The sister said, "Oh, I pray you, dear brother, do not drink, or you will become a roebuck, and run away from me." But the brother had knelt down at once by the brook, and had bent

down and drunk some of the water, and as soon as the first drops touched his lips he lay there a young roebuck.

And now the sister wept over her poor bewitched brother, and the little roe wept also, and sat sorrowfully near to her. But at last the girl said, "Be quiet, dear little roe, I will never, never leave you."

Then she untied her golden garter and put it round the roebuck's neck, and she plucked rushes and wove them into a soft cord. With this she tied the little beast and led it on, and she walked deeper and deeper into the forest.

And when they had gone a very long way they came at last to a little house, and the girl looked in; and as it was empty, she thought, "We can stay here and live." Then she sought for leaves and moss to make a soft bed for the roe; and every morning she went out and gathered roots and berries and nuts for herself, and brought tender grass for the roe, who ate out of her hand, and was content and played round about her. In the evening, when the sister was tired, and had said her prayer, she laid her head upon the roebuck's back: that was her pillow, and she slept softly on it. And if only the brother had had his human form it would have been a delightful life.

For some time they were alone like this in the wilderness. But it happened that the King of the country held a great hunt in the forest. Then the blasts of the horns, the barking of dogs, and the merry shouts of the the huntsmen rang through the trees, and the roebuck heard all, and was only too anxious to be there. "Oh," said he to his sister, "let me be off to the hunt, I cannot bear it any longer"; and he begged so much that at last she agreed. "But," said she to him, "come back to me in the evening; I must shut my door for fear of the rough huntsmen, so knock and say, 'My little sister, let me in!' that I may know you; and if you do not say that, I shall not open the door." Then the young roebuck sprang away; so happy was he and so merry in the open air.

The King and the huntsmen saw the pretty creature, and started after him, but they could not catch him, and when they thought that they surely had him, away he sprang through the bushes and could not be seen. When it was dark he ran to the cottage, knocked, and said, "My little sister, let me in." Then the door was opened for him, and he jumped in, and rested himself the whole night through upon his soft bed.

The next day the hunt went on afresh, and when the roebuck again heard the hunting-horn, and the ho! ho! of the huntsmen, he had no peace, but said, "Sister, let me out, I must be off." His sister opened the door for him, and said, "But you must be here again in the evening and say your password."

When the King and his huntsmen again saw the young roebuck with the golden collar, they all chased him, but he was too quick and nimble for them. This went on for the whole day, but at last by the evening the huntsmen had surrounded him, and one of them wounded him a little in the foot, so that he limped and ran slowly. Then a hunter crept after him to the cottage and heard how he said, "My little sister let me in," and saw that the door was opened for him, and was shut again at once. The huntsman took notice of it all, and went to the King and told him what he had seen and heard. Then the King said, "Tomorrow we will hunt once more."

The little sister, however, was dreadfully frightened when she saw that her fawn was hurt. She washed the blood off him, laid herbs on the wound, and said, "Go to your bed, dear roe, that you may get well again." But the wound was so slight that the roebuck, next morning, did not feel it any more. And when he again heard the sport outside, he said, "I cannot bear it, I must be there; they shall not find it so easy to catch me." The sister cried, and said, "This time they will kill you, and here am I alone in the forest and forsaken by all the world. I will not let you out." "Then you will have me die of grief," answered the roe; "when I hear the horns I feel as if I must jump out of my skin." Then the sister could not do otherwise, but opened the door for him with a heavy heart, and the roebuck, full of health and joy, bounded into the forest.

When the King saw him, he said to his huntsman, "Now chase him all day long till nightfall, but take care that no one does him any harm."

As soon as the sun had set, the King said to the huntsman, "Now come and show me the cottage in the wood"; and when he was at the door, he knocked and called out, "Dear little sister, let me in." Then the door opened, and the King walked in, and there stood a maiden more lovely than any he had ever seen. The maiden was frightened when she saw, not her little roe, but a man come in who wore a golden crown upon his head. But the King looked kindly at her, stretched out his hand, and said, "Will you go with me to my palace and be my dear wife?" "Yes, indeed," answered the maiden, "but the little roe must go with me, I cannot leave him." The King said, "It shall stay with you as long as you live, and shall want nothing." Just then he came running in, and the sister again tied him with the cord of rushes, took it in her own hand, and went away with the King from the cottage.

The King took the lovely maiden upon his horse and carried her to his palace, where the wedding was held with great pomp. She was

now the Queen, and they lived for a long time happily together; the roebuck was tended and cherished, and ran about in the palace garden.

But the wicked stepmother, because of whom the children had gone out into the world, thought all the time that the sister had been torn to pieces by the wild beasts in the wood, and that the brother had been shot for a roebuck by the huntsmen. Now when she heard that they were so happy, and so well off, envy and hatred rose in her heart and left her no peace, and she thought of nothing but how she could bring them again to misfortune. Her own daughter, who was as ugly as night, and had only one eye, grumbled at her and said, "A Queen! that ought to have been my luck." "Only be quiet," answered the old woman, and comforted her by saying, "when the time comes I shall be ready."

As time went on, the Queen had a pretty little boy, and it happened that the King was out hunting; so the old witch took the form of the chambermaid, went into the room where the Queen lay, and said to her, "Come, the bath is ready; it will do you good, and give you fresh strength; make haste before it gets cold."

The daughter also was close by; so they carried the sickly Queen into the bathroom, and put her into the bath; then they shut the door and ran away. But in the bathroom they had made a fire of such deadly heat that the beautiful young Queen was soon suffocated.

When this was done the old woman took her daughter, put a night-cap on her head, and laid her in bed in place of the Queen. She gave her too the shape and the look of the Queen, only she could not make good the lost eye. But in order that the King might not see it, she was to lie on the side on which she had no eye.

In the evening when he came home and heard that he had a son he was heartily glad, and was going to the bed of his dear wife to see how she was. But the old woman quickly called out, "For your life leave the curtains closed; the Queen ought not to see the light yet, and must have rest." The King went away, and did not find out that a false Queen was lying in the bed.

But at midnight, when all slept, the nurse, who was sitting in the nursery by the cradle, and who was the only person awake, saw the door open and the true Queen walk in. She took the child out of the cradle, laid it on her arm, and suckled it. Then she shook up its pillow, laid the child down again, and covered it with the little quilt. And she did not forget the roebuck, but went into the corner where it lay, and stroked its back. Then she went quite silently out of the door again. The next morning the nurse asked the guards whether anyone had

come into the palace during the night, but they answered, "No, we have seen no one."

She came thus many nights and never spoke a word: the nurse always saw her, but she did not dare to tell anyone about it.

When some time had passed in this manner, the Queen began to speak in the night, and said—

*"How fares my child, how fares my roe?
Twice shall I come, then never more."*

The nurse did not answer, but when the Queen had gone again, went to the King and told him all. The King said, "Ah, heavens! what is this? Tomorrow night I will watch by the child." In the evening he went into the nursery, and at midnight the Queen again appeared and said—

*"How fares my child, how fares my roe?
Once will I come, then never more."*

And she nursed the child as she was wont to do before she disappeared. The King dared not speak to her, but on the next night he watched again. Then she said—

*"How fares my child, how fares my roe?
This time I come, then never more."*

Then the King could not restrain himself; he sprang toward her, and said, "You can be none other than my dear wife." She answered, "Yes, I am your dear wife," and at the same moment she received life again, and by God's grace became fresh, rosy, and full of health.

Then she told the King the evil deed which the wicked witch and her daughter had been guilty of toward her. The King ordered both to be led before the judge, and judgment was delivered against them. The daughter was taken into the forest where she was torn to pieces by wild beasts, but the witch was cast into the fire and miserably burned. And as soon as she was burned the roebuck changed his shape, and received his human form again, so the sister and brother lived happily together all their lives.

THE TAILOR IN HEAVEN

ONE VERY FINE DAY it came to pass that the good God wished to enjoy himself in the heavenly garden, and took all the apostles and saints with him, so that no one stayed in heaven but Saint Peter.

The Lord had commanded him to let no one in during his absence, so Peter stood by the door and kept watch. Before long someone knocked. Peter asked who was there, and what he wanted? "I am a poor, honest tailor who prays for admission," replied a smooth voice. "Honest indeed," said Peter, "like the thief on the gallows! You have been light-fingered and have snipped folks' clothes away. You will not get into heaven. The Lord has forbidden me to let anyone in while he is out." "Come, do be merciful," cried the tailor. "Little scraps which fall off the table of their own accord are not stolen, and are not worth speaking about. Look, I am lame, and have blisters on my feet with walking here, I cannot possibly turn back again. Only let me in, and I will do all the rough work. I will carry the children, and wash their clothes, and wash and clean the benches on which they have been playing, and patch all their torn clothes." Saint Peter let himself be moved by pity, and opened the door of heaven just wide enough for the lame tailor to slip his lean body in. He was forced to sit down in a corner behind the door, and was to stay quietly and peaceably there, in order that the Lord, when he returned, might not observe him and be angry. The tailor obeyed, but once when Saint Peter went outside the door, he got up, and full of curiosity, went round about into every corner of heaven, and inspected the arrangement of every place. At length he came to a spot where many beautiful and delightful chairs were standing, and in the midst was a seat all of gold which was set with shining jewels, likewise it was much higher than the other chairs, and a footstool of gold was before it. It was, however, the seat on which the Lord sat when he was at home, and from which he could see everything which happened on earth. The tailor stood still, and looked at the seat for a long time, for it pleased him better than all else. At last he could master his curiosity no longer, and climbed up and seated himself in the chair. Then he saw everything which was happening on earth, and observed an ugly old woman who was standing washing by the side of a stream, secretly laying two veils on one side for herself. The sight of this made the tailor so angry that he laid hold of the golden footstool, and threw it down to earth through heaven, at the old thief. As, however, he could not bring the stool back again, he slipped quietly out of the chair, seated himself in his place behind the door, and behaved as if he had never stirred from the spot.

When the Lord and master came back again with his heavenly companions, he did not see the tailor behind the door, but when he seated himself on his chair the footstool was missing. He asked Saint Peter what had become of the stool, but he did not know. Then he asked if he had let anyone come in. "I know of no one who has been here," answered Peter, "but a lame tailor, who is still sitting behind the door."

Then the Lord had the tailor brought before him, and asked him if he had taken away the stool, and where he had put it? "Oh, Lord," answered the tailor joyously, "I threw it in my anger down to earth at an old woman whom I saw stealing two veils at the washing." "Oh, you knave," said the Lord, "were I to judge as you judge, how do you think you could have escaped so long? I should long ago have had no chairs, benches, seats, nay, not even an oven-fork, but should have thrown everything down at the sinners. Henceforth you can stay no longer in heaven, but must go outside the door again. Then go where you will. No one shall give punishment here, but I alone, the Lord."

Peter was obliged to take the tailor out of heaven again, and as he had torn shoes, and feet covered with blisters, he took a stick in his hand, and went to "Wait-a-bit," where the good soldiers sit and make merry.

FRAU TRUDE

THERE WAS ONCE a little girl who was obstinate and inquisitive, and when her parents told her to do anything, she did not obey them, so how could she fare well? One day she said to her parents, "I have heard so much of Frau Trude, I will go to her some day. People say that everything about her does look so strange, and that there are such odd things in her house, that I have become quite curious!" Her parents absolutely forbade her, and said, "Frau Trude is a bad woman, who does wicked things, and if you go to her, you are no longer our child." But the maiden did not let herself be turned aside by her parent's prohibition, and still went to Frau Trude. And when she got to her, Frau Trude said, "Why are you so pale?" "Ah," she replied, and her whole body trembled, "I have been so terrified at what I have seen." "What have you seen?" "I saw a black man on your steps." "That was a collier." "Then I saw a green man." "That was a huntsman." "After that I saw a blood-red man." "That was a butcher." "Ah, Frau Trude, I was terrified; I looked through the window and saw not you, but, as I verily believe, the devil himself with a head of fire." "Oho!" said she. "then you have seen the witch in her proper costume. I have been waiting for you, and wanting you a long time already; you shall give me some light." Then she changed the girl into a block of wood, and threw it into the fire. And when it was in full blaze she sat down close to it, and warmed herself by it, and said, "That shines bright for once in a way."

THE WATER OF LIFE

THERE WAS once a King who had an illness, and no one believed that he would come out of it with his life. He had three sons who were much distressed about it, and went down into the palace garden and wept. There they met an old man who inquired as to the cause of their grief. They told him that their father was so ill that he would most certainly die, for nothing seemed to cure him. Then the old man said, "I know of one more remedy, and that is the water of life; if he drinks of it he will become well again; but it is hard to find." The eldest said, "I will manage to find it," and went to the sick King, and begged to be allowed to go forth in search of the water of life, for that alone could save him. "No," said the King, "the danger of it is too great. I would rather die." But he begged so long that the King consented. The prince thought in his heart, "If I bring the water, then I shall be best beloved of my father, and shall inherit the kingdom." So he set out, and when he had ridden forth a little distance, a dwarf stood there in the road who called to him and said, "Whither away so fast?" "Silly shrimp," said the prince, very haughtily, "it is nothing to you," and rode on. But the little dwarf had grown angry, and had wished an evil wish. Soon after this the prince entered a ravine, and the further he rode the closer the mountains drew together, and at last the road became so narrow that he could not advance a step further; it was impossible either to turn his horse or to dismount from the saddle, and he was shut in there as if in prison. The sick King waited long for him, but he came not. Then the second son said, "Father, let me go forth to seek the water," and thought to himself, "If my brother is dead, then the kingdom will fall to me." At first the King would not allow him to go either, but at last he yielded, so the prince set out on the same road that his brother had taken, and he too met the dwarf, who stopped him to ask, whither he was going in such haste? "Little shrimp," said the prince, "that is nothing to you," and rode on without giving him another look. But the dwarf bewitched him, and he, like the other, got into a ravine, and could neither go forward nor backward. So fare haughty people.

As the second son also remained away, the youngest begged to be allowed to go forth to fetch the water, and at last the King was obliged to let him go. When he met the dwarf and the latter asked him whither he was going in such haste, he stopped, gave him an explanation, and said, "I am seeking the water of life, for my father is sick unto death." "Do you know, then, where that is to be found?" "No," said the

prince. "As you have borne yourself as is seemly, and not haughtily like your false brothers, I will give you the information and tell you how you may obtain the water of life. It springs from a fountain in the courtyard of an enchanted castle, but you will not be able to make your way to it, if I do not give you an iron wand and two small loaves of bread. Strike thrice with the wand on the iron door of the castle, and it will spring open: inside lie two lions with gaping jaws, but if you throw a loaf to each of them, they will be quieted, then hasten to fetch some of the water of life before the clock strikes twelve, else the door will shut again, and you will be imprisoned." The prince thanked him, took the wand and the bread, and set out on his way. When he arrived, everything was as the dwarf had said. The door sprang open at the third stroke of the wand, and when he had appeased the lions with the bread, he entered into the castle, and came in a large and splendid hall, wherein sat some enchanted princes whose rings he drew off their fingers. A sword and a loaf of bread were lying there, which he carried away. After this, he entered a chamber, in which was a beautiful maiden who rejoiced when she saw him, kissed him, and told him that he had delivered her, and should have the whole of her kingdom, and that if he would return in a year their wedding should be celebrated; likewise she told him where the spring of the water of life was, and that he was to hasten and draw some of it before the clock struck twelve. Then he went onward, and at last entered a room where there was a beautiful newly made bed, and as he was very weary, he felt inclined to rest a little. So he lay down and fell asleep. When he awoke, it was striking a quarter to twelve. He sprang up in a fright, ran to the spring, drew some water in a cup which stood near, and hastened away. But just as he was passing through the iron door, the clock struck twelve, and the door fell to with such violence that it carried away a piece of his heel. He, however, rejoicing at having obtained the water of life, went homeward, and again passed the dwarf. When the latter saw the sword and the loaf, he said, "With these you have won great wealth; with the sword you can slay whole armies, and the bread will never come to an end." But the prince would not go home to his father without his brothers, and said, "Dear dwarf, can you not tell me where my two brothers are? They went out before I did in search of the water of life, and have not returned." "They are imprisoned between two mountains," said the dwarf. "I have condemned them to stay there, because they were so haughty." Then the prince begged until the dwarf released them; he warned him, however, and said, "Beware of them, for they have bad hearts." When his brothers came, he rejoiced, and told them how things had gone with him, that he had found the water of life, and had brought

a cupful away with him, and had delivered a beautiful princess, who was willing to wait a year for him, and then their wedding was to be celebrated, and he would obtain a great kingdom. After that they rode on together, and chanced upon a land where war and famine reigned, and the King already thought he must perish, for the scarcity was so great. Then the prince went to him and gave him the loaf, wherewith he fed and satisfied the whole of his kingdom, and then the prince gave him the sword also, wherewith he slew the hosts of his enemies, and could now live in rest and peace. The prince then took back his loaf and his sword, and the three brothers rode on. But after this they entered two more countries where war and famine reigned, and each time the prince gave his loaf and his sword to the Kings, and had now delivered three kingdoms, and after that they went on board a ship and sailed over the sea. During the passage, the two eldest conversed apart and said, "The youngest has found the water of life and not we, for that our father will give him the kingdom—the kingdom which belongs to us, and he will rob us of all our fortune." They then began to seek revenge, and plotted with each other to destroy him. They waited until once when they found him fast asleep, then they poured the water of life out of the cup, and took it for themselves, but into the cup they poured salt sea-water. Now therefore, when they arrived at home, the youngest took his cup to the sick King in order that he might drink out of it, and be cured. But scarcely had he drunk a very little of the salt sea-water than he became still worse than before. And as he was lamenting over this, the two eldest brothers came, and accused the youngest of having intended to poison him, and said that they had brought him the true water of life, and handed it to him. He had scarcely tasted it, when he felt his sickness departing, and became strong and healthy as in the days of his youth. After that they both went to the youngest, mocked him, and said, "You certainly found the water of life, but you have had the pain, and we the gain; you should have been sharper, and should have kept your eyes open. We took it from you while you were asleep at sea, and when a year is over, one of us will go and fetch the beautiful princess. But beware that you do not disclose any of this to our father; indeed he does not trust you, and if you say a single word, you shall lose your life into the bargain, but if you keep silent, you shall have it as a gift."

The old King was angry with his youngest son, and thought he had plotted against his life. So he summoned the court together, and had sentence pronounced upon his son, that he should be secretly shot. And once when the prince was riding forth to the chase, suspecting no evil, the King's huntsman had to go with him, and when they were quite alone in the forest, the huntsman looked so sorrowful that the

prince said to him, "Dear huntsman, what ails you?" The huntsman said, "I cannot tell you, and yet I ought." Then the prince said, "Say openly what it is, I will pardon you." "Alas!" said the huntsman, "I am to shoot you dead, the King has ordered me to do it." Then the prince was shocked, and said, "Dear huntsman, let me live; there, I give you my royal garments; give me your common ones in their stead." The huntsman said, "I will willingly do that, indeed I should not have been able to shoot you." Then they exchanged clothes, and the huntsman returned home; the prince, however, went further into the forest. After a time three wagons of gold and precious stones came to the King for his youngest son, which were sent by the three Kings who had slain their enemies with the prince's sword, and maintained their people with his bread, and who wished to show their gratitude for it. The old King then thought, "Can my son have been innocent?" and said to his people, "Would that he were still alive, how it grieves me that I have suffered him to be killed!" "He still lives," said the huntsman, "I could not find it in my heart to carry out your command," and told the King how it had happened. Then a stone fell from the King's heart, and he had it proclaimed in every country that his son might return and be taken into favor again.

The princess, however, had a road made up to her palace which was quite bright and golden, and told her people that whoever came riding straight along it to her, would be the right suitor and was to be admitted, and whoever rode by the side of it, was not the right one, and was not to be admitted. As the time was now close at hand, the eldest thought he would hasten to go to the King's daughter, and give himself out as her deliverer, and thus win her for his bride, and the kingdom to boot. Therefore he rode forth, and when he arrived in front of the palace, and saw the splendid golden road, he thought it would be a sin and a shame if he were to ride over that, and turned aside, and rode on the right side of it. But when he came to the door, the servants told him that he was not the right man, and was to go away again. Soon after this the second prince set out, and when he came to the golden road, and his horse had put one foot on it, he thought it would be a sin and a shame to tread a piece of it off, and he turned aside and rode on the left side of it, and when he reached the door, the attendants told him he was not the right one, and was to go away again. When at last the year had entirely expired, the third son likewise wished to ride out of the forest to his beloved, with her to forget his sorrows. So he set out and thought of her so incessantly, and wished to be with her so much, that he never noticed the golden road at all. So his horse rode onward up the middle of it, and when he came to the door, it was opened and the princess

received him with joy, and said he was her deliverer, and lord of the kingdom, and their wedding was celebrated with great rejoicing. When it was over she told him that his father invited him to come to him, and had forgiven him. So he rode thither, and told him everything; how his brothers had betrayed him, and how he had nevertheless kept silence. The old King wished to punish them, but they had put to sea, and never came back as long as they lived.

GODFATHER DEATH

A POOR MAN had twelve children and was forced to work night and day to give them even bread. When therefore the thirteenth came into the world, he knew not what to do in his trouble, but ran out into the great highway, and resolved to ask the first person whom he met to be godfather. The first to meet him was the good God who already knew what filled his heart, and said to him, "Poor man, I pity you. I will hold your child at its christening, and will take charge of it and make it happy on earth." The man said, "Who are you?" "I am God." "Then I do not desire to have you for a godfather," said the man; "you give to the rich, and leave the poor to hunger." Thus spoke the man, for he did not know how wisely God apportions riches and poverty. He turned therefore away from the Lord, and went farther. Then the Devil came to him and said, "What do you seek? If you will take me as a godfather for your child, I will give him gold in plenty and all the joys of the world as well." The man asked, "Who are you?" "I am the Devil." "Then I do not desire to have you for godfather," said the man; "you deceive men and lead them astray." He went onward, and then came Death striding up to him with withered legs, and said, "Take me as godfather." The man asked, "Who are you?" "I am Death, and I make all equal." Then said the man, "You are the right one, you take the rich as well as the poor, without distinction; you shall be godfather." Death answered, "I will make your child rich and famous, for he who has me for a friend can lack nothing." The man said, "Next Sunday is the christening; be there at the right time." Death appeared as he had promised, and stood godfather quite in the usual way.

When the boy had grown up, his godfather one day appeared and bade him go with him. He led him forth into a forest, and showed him a herb which grew there, and said, "Now shall you receive your godfather's present. I make you a celebrated physician. When you are called

to a patient, I will always appear to you. If I stand by the head of the sick man, you may say with confidence that you will make him well again, and if you give him of this herb he will recover; but if I stand by the patient's feet, he is mine, and you must say that all remedies are in vain, and that no physician in the world could save him. But beware of using the herb against my will, or it might fare ill with you."

It was not long before the youth was the most famous physician in the whole world. "He had only to look at the patient and he knew his condition at once, and if he would recover, or must needs die." So they said of him, and from far and wide people came to him, sent for him when they had anyone ill, and gave him so much money that he soon became a rich man. Now it so befell that the King became ill, and the physician was summoned, and was to say if recovery were possible. But when he came to the bed, Death was standing by the feet of the sick man, and the herb did not grow which could save him. "If I could but cheat Death for once," thought the physician, "he is sure to take it ill if I do, but, as I am his godson, he will shut one eye; I will risk it." He therefore took up the sick man, and laid him the other way, so that now Death was standing by his head. Then he gave the King some of the herb, and he recovered and grew healthy again. But Death came to the physician, looking very black and angry, threatened him with his finger, and said, "You have overreached me; this time I will pardon it, as you are my godson; but if you venture it again, it will cost you your neck, for I will take you yourself away with me."

Soon afterwards the King's daughter fell into a severe illness. She was his only child, and he wept day and night, so that he began to lose the sight of his eyes, and he caused it to be made known that whosoever rescued her from death should be her husband and inherit the crown. When the physician came to the sick girl's bed, he saw Death by her feet. He ought to have remembered the warning given by his godfather, but he was so infatuated by the great beauty of the King's daughter, and the happiness of becoming her husband, that he flung all thought to the winds. He did not see that Death was casting angry glances on him, that he was raising his hand in the air, and threatening him with his withered fist. He raised up the sick girl, and placed her head where her feet had lain. Then he gave her some of the herb, and instantly her cheeks flushed red, and life stirred afresh in her.

When Death saw that for a second time he was defrauded of his own property, he walked up to the physician with long strides, and said, "All is over with you, and now the lot falls on you," and seized him so firmly with his ice-cold hand, that he could not resist, and led him into a cave below the earth. There he saw how thousands and thousands of candles were burning in countless rows, some large, others

half-sized, others small. Every instant some were extinguished, and others again burned up, so that the flames seemed to leap hither and thither in perpetual change. "See," said Death, "these are the lights of men's lives. The large ones belong to children, the half-sized ones to married people in their prime; the little ones belong to old people; but children and young folks likewise have often only a tiny candle." "Show me the light of my life," said the physician, and he thought that it would be still very tall. Death pointed to a little end which was just threatening to go out, and said, "Behold, it is there." "Ah, dear godfather," said the horrified physician, "light a new one for me, do it for love of me, that I may enjoy my life, be King, and the husband of the King's beautiful daughter." "I cannot," answered Death, "one must go out before a new one is lighted." "Then place the old one on a new one, that will go on burning at once when the old one has come to an end," pleaded the physician. Death behaved as if he were going to fulfill his wish, and took hold of a tall new candle; but as he desired to revenge himself, he purposely made a mistake in fixing it, and the little piece fell down and was extinguished. Immediately the physician fell on the ground, and now he himself was in the hands of Death.

FITCHER'S BIRD

THERE WAS once a wizard who used to take the form of a poor man, and went to houses and begged, and caught pretty girls. No one knew whither he carried them, for they were never seen more. One day he appeared before the door of a man who had three pretty daughters; he looked like a poor weak beggar, and carried a basket on his back, as if he meant to collect charitable gifts in it. He begged for a little food, and when the eldest daughter came out and was just giving him a piece of bread, he did but touch her, and she was forced to jump into his basket. Thereupon he hurried away with long strides, and carried her into a dark forest to his house, which stood in the midst of it. Everything in the house was magnificent; he gave her whatever she could possibly desire, and said, "My darling, you will certainly be happy with me, for you have everything your heart can wish for." This lasted a few days, and then he said, "I must journey forth, and leave you alone for a short time; there are the keys of the house; you may go everywhere and look at everything except into one room, which this little key here opens, and there I forbid you to go on pain of death." He likewise gave her an egg and said, "Preserve the egg care-

fully for me, and carry it continually about with you, for a great misfortune would arise from the loss of it."

She took the keys and the egg, and promised to obey him in everything. When he was gone, she went all round the house from the bottom to the top, and examined everything. The rooms shone with silver and gold, and she thought she had never seen such great splendor. At length she came to the forbidden door; she wished to pass it by, but curiosity let her have no rest. She examined the key, it looked just like any other; she put it in the keyhole and turned it a little, and the door sprang open. But what did she see when she went in? A great bloody basin stood in the middle of the room, and therein lay human beings, dead and hewn to pieces, and hard by was a block of wood, and a gleaming ax lay upon it. She was so terribly alarmed that the egg which she held in her hand fell into the basin. She got it out and washed the blood off, but in vain, it appeared again in a moment. She washed and scrubbed, but she could not get it out.

It was not long before the man came back from his journey, and the first things which he asked for were the key and the egg. She gave them to him, but she trembled as she did so, and he saw at once by the red spots that she had been in the bloody chamber. "Since you have gone into the room against my will," said he, "you shall go back into it against your own. Your life is ended." He threw her down, dragged her thither by her hair, cut her head off on the block, and hewed her in pieces so that her blood ran on the ground. Then he threw her into the basin with the rest.

"Now I will fetch myself the second," said the wizard, and again he went to the house in the shape of a poor man, and begged. Then the second daughter brought him a piece of bread; he caught her like the first, by simply touching her, and carried her away. She did not fare better than her sister. She allowed herself to be led away by her curiosity, opened the door of the bloody chamber, looked in, and had to atone for it with her life on the wizard's return. Then he went and brought the third sister, but she was clever and crafty. When he had given her the keys and the egg, and had left her, she first put the egg away with great care, and then she examined the house, and at last went into the forbidden room. Alas, what did she behold! Both her sisters lay there in the basin, cruelly murdered, and cut in pieces. But she began to gather their limbs together and put them in order, head, body, arms and legs. And when nothing further was wanting the limbs began to move and unite themselves together, and both the maidens opened their eyes and were once more alive. Then they rejoiced and kissed and caressed each other.

On his arrival, the man at once demanded the keys and the egg,

and as he could perceive no trace of any blood on it, he said, "You have stood the test, you shall be my bride." He now had no longer any power over her, and was forced to do whatever she desired. "Oh, very well," said she, "you shall first take a basketful of gold to my father and mother, and carry it yourself on your back; in the meantime I will prepare for the wedding." Then she ran to her sisters, whom she had hidden in a little chamber and said, "The moment has come when I can save you. The wretch shall himself carry you home again, but as soon as you are at home send help to me." She put both of them in a basket and covered them quite over with gold, so that nothing of them was to be seen, then she called in the wizard and said to him, "Now carry the basket away, but I shall look through my little window and watch to see if you stop on the way to stand or to rest."

The wizard raised the basket on his back and went away with it, but it weighed him down so heavily that the perspiration streamed from his face. Then he sat down and wanted to rest awhile, but immediately one of the girls in the basket cried, "I am looking through my little window, and I see that you are resting. Will you go on at once?" He thought his bride was calling that to him; and got up on his legs again. Once more he was going to sit down, but instantly she cried, "I am looking through my little window, and I see that you are resting. Will you go on directly?" And whenever he stood still, she cried this, and then he was forced to go onward, until at last, groaning and out of breath, he took the basket with the gold and the two maidens into their parents' house. At home, however, the bride prepared the marriage feast, and sent invitations to the friends of the wizard. Then she took a skull with grinning teeth, put some ornaments on it and a wreath of flowers, carried it upstairs to the garret window, and let it look out from thence. When all was ready, she got into a barrel of honey, and then cut the featherbed open and rolled herself in it, until she looked like a wondrous bird, and no one could recognize her. Then she went out of the house, and on her way she met some of the wedding guests, who asked,

"O, Fitcher's bird, how come you here?"

"I come from Fitcher's house quite near."

"And what may the young bride be doing?"

"From cellar to garret she's swept all clean,

And now from the window she's peeping, I ween."

At last she met the bridegroom, who was coming slowly back. He like the others, asked,

"O, Fitcher's bird, how come you here?"

"I come from Fitcher's house quite near."

"And what may the young bride be doing?"

"From cellar to garret she's swept all clean,

And now from the window she's peeping, I ween."

The bridegroom looked up, saw the decked-out skull, thought it was his bride, and nodded to her, greeting her kindly. But when he and his guests had all gone into the house, the brothers and kinsmen of the bride, who had been sent to rescue her, arrived. They locked all the doors of the house, that no one might escape, set fire to it, and the wizard and all his crew had to burn.

THE JUNIPER TREE

IT IS NOW long ago, quite two thousand years, since there was a rich man who had a beautiful and pious wife, and they loved each other dearly. They had, however, no children, though they wished for them very much, and the woman prayed for them day and night, but still they had none. Now there was a courtyard in front of their house in which was a juniper tree, and one day in winter the woman was standing beneath it, paring herself an apple, and while she was paring herself the apple she cut her finger, and the blood fell on the snow. "Ah," said the woman, and sighed right heavily, and looked at the blood before her, and was most unhappy, "ah, if I had but a child as red as blood and as white as snow!" And while she thus spoke, she became quite happy in her mind, and felt just as if that were going to happen. Then she went into the house, and a month went by and the snow was gone, and two months, and then everything was green, and three months, and then all the flowers came out of the earth, and four months, and then all the trees in the wood grew thicker, and the green branches were all closely entwined, and the birds sang until the wood resounded and the blossoms fell from the trees, then the fifth month passed away and she stood under the juniper tree, which smelled so sweetly that her heart leapt, and she fell on her knees and was beside herself with joy, and when the sixth month was over the fruit was large and fine, and then she was quite still, and the seventh month she snatched at the juniper berries and ate them greedily, then she grew sick and sorrowful, then the eighth month passed, and she called her husband to her, and wept and said, "If I die, then bury me beneath the juniper tree." Then she was quite comforted and happy until the next month was over, and then she had a child as white as snow and

as red as blood, and when she beheld it she was so delighted that she died.

Then her husband buried her beneath the juniper tree, and he began to weep sore; after some time he was more at ease, and though he still wept he could bear it, and after some time longer he took another wife.

By the second wife he had a daughter, but the first wife's child was a little son, and he was as red as blood and as white as snow. When the woman looked at her daughter she loved her very much, but then she looked at the little boy and it seemed to cut her to the heart, for the thought came into her mind that he would always stand in her way, and she was forever thinking how she could get all the fortune for her daughter, and the Evil One filled her mind with this till she was quite angry with the little boy, and slapped him here and cuffed him there, until the unhappy child was in continual terror, for when he came out of school he had no peace in any place.

One day the woman had gone upstairs to her room, and her little daughter went up too, and said, "Mother, give me an apple." "Yes, my child," said the woman, and gave her a fine apple out of the chest, but the chest had a great heavy lid with a great sharp iron lock. "Mother," said the little daughter, "is brother not to have one too?" This made the woman angry, but she said, "Yes, when he comes out of school." And when she saw from the window that he was coming, it was just as if the Devil entered into her, and she snatched at the apple and took it away again from her daughter, and said, "You shall not have one before your brother." Then she threw the apple into the chest, and shut it. Then the little boy came in at the door, and the Devil made her say to him kindly, "My son, will you have an apple?" and she looked so wickedly at him. "Mother," said the little boy, "how dreadful you look! Yes, give me an apple." Then it seemed to her as if she were forced to say to him, "Come with me," and she opened the lid of the chest and said, "Take out an apple for yourself," and while the little boy was stooping inside, the Devil prompted her, and crash! she shut the lid down, and his head flew off and fell among the red apples. Then she was overwhelmed with terror, and thought, "If I could but make them think that it was not done by me!" So she went upstairs to her room to her chest of drawers, and took a white handkerchief out of the top drawer, and set the head on the neck again, and folded the handkerchief so that nothing could be seen, and she set him on a chair in front of the door, and put the apple in his hand.

After this Marlinchen came into the kitchen to her mother, who was standing by the fire with a pan of hot water before her which she was constantly stirring round. "Mother," said Marlinchen, "brother is sit-

ting at the door, and he looks quite white, and has an apple in his hand. I asked him to give me the apple, but he did not answer me, and I was quite frightened." "Go back to him," said her mother, "and if he will not answer you, give him a box on the ear." So Marlinchen went to him and said, "Brother, give me the apple." But he was silent, and she gave him a box on the ear, on which his head fell down. Marlinchen was terrified, and began crying and screaming, and ran to her mother, and said, "Alas, mother, I have knocked my brother's head off!" and she wept and wept and could not be comforted. "Marlinchen," said the mother, "what have you done? but be quiet and let no one know it; it cannot be helped now, we will make him into black puddings." Then the mother took the little boy and chopped him in pieces, put him into the pan and made him into black puddings; but Marlinchen stood by weeping and weeping, and all her tears fell into the pan and there was no need of any salt.

Then the father came home, and sat down to dinner and said, "But where is my son?" And the mother served up a great dish of black puddings, and Marlinchen wept and could not leave off. Then the father again said, "But where is my son?" "Ah," said the mother, "he has gone across the country to his mother's great uncle; he will stay there awhile." "And what is he going to do there? He did not even say good-bye to me."

"Oh, he wanted to go, and asked me if he might stay six weeks, he is well taken care of there." "Ah," said the man, "I feel so unhappy lest all should not be right. He ought to have said good-bye to me." With that he began to eat and said, "Marlinchen, why are you crying? Your brother will certainly come back." Then he said, "Ah, wife, how delicious this food is, give me some more." And the more he ate the more he wanted to have, and he said, "Give me some more, you shall have none of it. It seems to me as if it were all mine." And he ate and ate and threw all the bones under the table, until he had finished the whole. But Marlinchen went away to her chest of drawers, and took her best silk handkerchief out of the bottom drawer, and got all the bones from beneath the table, and tied them up in her silk handkerchief, and carried them outside the door, weeping tears of blood. Then the juniper tree began to stir itself, and the branches parted asunder, and moved together again, just as if some one was rejoicing and clapping his hands. At the same time a mist seemed to arise from the tree, and in the center of this mist it burned like a fire and a beautiful bird flew out of the fire singing magnificently, and he flew high up in the air, and when he was gone, the juniper tree was just as it had been before, and the handkerchief with the bones was no longer there. Marlinchen, however, was as gay and happy as if her

brother were still alive. And she went merrily into the house, and sat down to dinner and ate.

But the bird flew away and lighted on a goldsmith's house, and began to sing,

*"My mother she killed me,
My father he ate me,
My sister, little Marlinchen,
Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,
Laid them beneath the juniper tree.
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"*

The goldsmith was sitting in his workshop making a gold chain, when he heard the bird which was singing on his roof, and very beautiful the song seemed to him. He stood up, but as he crossed the threshold he lost one of his slippers. But he went away right up the middle of the street with one shoe on and one sock; he had his apron on, and in one hand he had the gold chain and in the other the pincers, and the sun was shining brightly on the street. Then he went right on and stood still, and said to the bird, "Bird," said he then, "how beautifully you can sing! Sing me that piece again." "No," said the bird, "I'll not sing it twice for nothing! Give me the golden chain, and then I will sing it again for you." "There," said the goldsmith, "there is the golden chain for you, now sing me that song again." Then the bird came and took the golden chain in his right claw, and went and sat in front of the goldsmith, and sang,

*"My mother she killed me,
My father he ate me,
My sister, little Marlinchen,
Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,
Laid them beneath the juniper tree.
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"*

Then the bird flew away to a shoemaker, and lighted on his roof, and sang,

*"My mother she killed me,
My father he ate me,
My sister, little Marlinchen,
Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,
Laid them beneath the juniper tree,
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"*

The shoemaker heard that and ran out of doors in his shirt sleeves, and looked up at his roof, and was forced to hold his hand before his eyes lest the sun should blind him. "Bird," said he, "how beautifully you can sing!" Then he called in at his door, "Wife, just come outside, there is a bird, look at that bird, he just can sing well." Then he called his daughter and children, and apprentices, boys and girls, and they all came up the street and looked at the bird and how beautiful he was, and what fine red and green feathers he had, and how like real gold his neck was, and how the eyes in his head shone like stars. "Bird," said the shoemaker, "now sing me that song again." "No," said the bird, "I do not sing twice for nothing; you must give me something." "Wife," said the man, "go to the garret, upon the top shelf there stands a pair of red shoes, bring them down." Then the wife went and brought the shoes. "There, bird," said the man, "now sing me that piece again." Then the bird came and took the shoes in his left claw, and flew back on the roof, and sang,

*"My mother she killed me,
My father he ate me,
My sister, little Marlinchen,
Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,
Laid them beneath the juniper tree,
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"*

And when he had sung the whole he flew away. In his right claw he had the chain and the shoes in his left, and he flew far away to a mill, and the mill went "klipp-klapp, klipp-klapp, klipp-klapp," and in the mill sat twenty miller's men hewing a stone, and cutting, hick-hack, hick-hack, hick-hack, and the mill went klipp-klapp, klipp-klapp, klipp-klapp. Then the bird went and sat on a lime tree which stood in front of the mill, and sang,

"My mother she killed me,"

Then one of them stopped working,

"My father he ate me,"

Then two more stopped working and listened to that,

"My sister little Marlinchen,"

Then four more stopped,

*"Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,"*

Now eight only were hewing,

"Laid them beneath"

Now only five,

"The juniper tree,"

And now only one,

"Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"

Then the last stopped also, and heard the last words. "Bird," said he, "how beautifully you sing! Let me, too, hear that. Sing that once more for me."

"No," said the bird, "I will not sing twice for nothing. Give me the millstone, and then I will sing it again."

"Yes," said he, "if it belonged to me only, you should have it."

"Yes," said the others, "if he sings again he shall have it." Then the bird came down, and the twenty millers all set to work with a beam and raised the stone up. And the bird stuck his neck through the hole, and put the stone on as if it were a collar, and flew on to the tree again, and sang,

*"My mother she killed me,
My father he ate me,
My sister, little Marlinchen,
Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,
Laid them beneath the juniper tree,
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"*

And when he had done singing, he spread his wings, and in his right claw he had the chain, and in his left the shoes, and round his neck the millstone, and he flew far away to his father's house.

In the room sat the father, the mother, and Marlinchen at dinner, and the father said, "How lighthearted I feel, how happy I am!" "Nay," said the mother, "I feel so uneasy, just as if a heavy storm were coming." Marlinchen, however, sat weeping and weeping, and then came the bird flying, and as it seated itself on the roof the father said, "Ah, I feel so truly happy, and the sun is shining so beautifully outside, I feel just as if I were about to see some old friend again." "Nay," said the woman, "I feel so anxious, my teeth chatter, and I seem to have fire in my veins." And she tore her stays open, but Marlinchen sat in a corner crying, and held her plate before her eyes and cried till it was quite wet. Then the bird sat on the juniper tree, and sang,

"My mother she killed me,"

Then the mother stopped her ears, and shut her eyes, and would not see or hear, but there was a roaring in her ears like the most violent storm, and her eyes burned and flashed like lightning,

"My father he ate me,"

"Ah, mother," says the man, "that is a beautiful bird! He sings so splendidly, and the sun shines so warm, and there is a smell just like cinnamon."

"My sister, Marlinchen,"

Then Marlinchen laid her head on her knees and wept without ceasing, but the man said, "I am going out, I must see the bird quite close." "Oh, don't go," said the woman, "I feel as if the whole house were shaking and on fire." But the man went out and looked at the bird:

*"Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,
Laid them under the juniper tree,
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"*

On this the bird let the golden chain fall, and it fell exactly round the man's neck, and so exactly round it that it fitted beautifully. Then he went in and said, "Just look what a fine bird that is, and what a handsome gold chain he has given me, and how pretty he is!" But the woman was terrified, and fell down on the floor in the room, and her cap fell off her head. Then sang the bird once more,

"My mother she killed me,"

"Would that I were a thousand feet beneath the earth so as not to hear that!"

"My father he ate me,"

Then the woman fell down again as if dead.

"My sister, little Marlinchen,"

"Ah," said Marlinchen, "I too will go out and see if the bird will give me anything," and she went out.

*"Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,"*

Then he threw down the shoes to her.

*"Laid them beneath the juniper tree,
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird am I!"*

Then she was lighthearted and joyous, and she put on the new red shoes, and danced and leaped into the house. "Ah," said she, "I was

so sad when I went out and now I am so lighthearted; that is a splendid bird, he has given me a pair of red shoes!" "Well," said the woman, and sprang to her feet and her hair stood up like flames of fire, "I feel as if the world were coming to an end! I, too, will go out and see if my heart feels lighter." And as she went out at the door, crash! the bird threw down the millstone on her head, and she was entirely crushed by it. The father and Marlinchen heard what had happened and went out, and smoke, flames and fire were rising from the place, and when that was over, there stood the little brother, and he took his father and Marlinchen by the hand, and all three were right glad, and they went into the house to dinner, and ate.

THE DOG AND THE SPARROW

A SHEEP DOG had not a good master, but, on the contrary, one who let him go hungry. As he could stay no longer with him, he went quite sadly away. On the road he met a sparrow who said, "Brother dog, why are you so sad?" The dog replied, "I am hungry, and have nothing to eat." Then said the sparrow, "Dear brother, come into the town with me, and I will satisfy your hunger." So they went into the town together, and when they came in front of a butcher's shop the sparrow said to the dog, "Stay there, and I will pick a bit of meat down for you," and he alighted on the stall, looked about him to see that no one was observing him, and pecked and pulled and tore so long at a piece which lay on the edge, that it slipped down. Then the dog seized it, ran into a corner, and devoured it. The sparrow said, "Now come with me to another shop, and then I will get you one more piece that you may be satisfied." When the dog had devoured the second piece as well, the sparrow asked, "Brother dog, have you now had enough?" "Yes, I have had meat enough," he answered, "but I have had no bread yet." Said the sparrow, "You shall have that also, come with me." Then he took him to a baker's shop, and pecked at a couple of little buns till they rolled down, and as the dog wanted still more, he led him to another stall, and again got bread for him. When that was consumed, the sparrow said, "Brother dog, have you now had enough?" "Yes," he replied, "now we will walk awhile outside the town." Then they both went out on to the highway. It was, however, warm weather, and when they had walked a little way the dog said, "I am tired, and would like to sleep." "Well, do sleep," answered the sparrow, "and in the meantime I will seat myself on a branch." So the

dog lay down on the road, and fell fast asleep. While he lay sleeping there, a wagoner came driving by, who had a cart with three horses, laden with two barrels of wine. The sparrow, however, saw that he was not going to turn aside, but was staying in the wheel track in which the dog was lying, so it cried, "Wagoner, don't do it, or I will make you poor." The wagoner, however, growled to himself, "You will not make me poor," and cracked his whip and drove the cart over the dog, and the wheels killed him. Then the sparrow cried, "You have driven over my brother dog and killed him, it shall cost you your cart and horses." "Cart and horses indeed!" said the wagoner. "What harm can you do me?" and drove onward. Then the sparrow crept under the cover of the cart, and pecked so long at the same bung-hole that he got the bung out, and then all the wine ran out without the driver noticing it. But once when he was looking behind him he saw that the cart was dripping, and looked at the barrels and saw that one of them was empty. "Unfortunate fellow that I am," cried he. "Not unfortunate enough yet," said the sparrow, and flew on to the head of one of the horses and pecked his eyes out. When the driver saw that, he drew out his ax and wanted to hit the sparrow, but the sparrow flew into the air, and he hit his horse on the head, and it fell down dead. "Oh, what an unfortunate man I am," cried he. "Not unfortunate enough yet," said the sparrow, and when the driver drove on with the two horses, the sparrow again crept under the cover, and pecked the bung out of the second cask, so all the wine was spilled. When the driver became aware of it, he again cried, "Oh, what an unfortunate man I am," but the sparrow replied, "Not unfortunate enough yet," and seated himself on the head of the second horse, and pecked his eyes out. The driver ran up to it and raised his ax to strike, but the sparrow flew in the air and the blow struck the horse, which fell. "Oh, what an unfortunate man I am." "Not unfortunate enough yet," said the sparrow, and lighted on the third horse's head, and pecked out his eyes. The driver, in his rage, struck at the sparrow without looking round, and did not hit him, but killed his third horse likewise. "Oh, what an unfortunate man I am," cried he. "Not unfortunate enough yet," answered the sparrow. "Now will I make you unfortunate in your home," and flew away.

The driver had to leave the wagon standing, and full of anger and vexation went home. "Ah," said he to his wife, "what misfortunes I have had! My wine has run out, and the horses are all three dead!" "Alas, husband," she answered, "what a malicious bird has come into the house! It has gathered together every bird there is in the world, and they have fallen on our corn up there, and are devouring it." Then he went upstairs, and thousands and thousands of birds were sitting in

the loft and had eaten up all the corn, and the sparrow was sitting in the midst of them. Then the driver cried, "Oh, what an unfortunate man I am."

"Not unfortunate enough yet!" answered the sparrow; "wagoner, it shall cost you your life as well," and flew out.

Then the wagoner had lost all his property, and he went downstairs into the room, sat down behind the stove and was quite furious and bitter. But the sparrow sat outside in front of the window, and cried, "Wagoner, it shall cost you your life." Then the wagoner snatched the ax and threw it at the sparrow, but it only broke the window, and did not hit the bird. The sparrow now hopped in, placed itself on the stove and cried, "Wagoner, it shall cost you your life." The latter, quite mad and blind with rage, smote the stove in twain, and as the sparrow flew from one place to another so it fared with all his household furniture, looking glass, benches, table, and at last the walls of his house, and yet he could not hit the bird. At length, however, he caught it with his hand. Then his wife said, "Shall I kill it?" "No," cried he, "that would be too merciful. It shall die much more cruelly," and he took it and swallowed it whole. The sparrow, however, began to flutter about in his body, and fluttered up again into the man's mouth; then it stretched out its head, and cried, "Wagoner, it shall still cost you your life." The driver gave the ax to his wife, and said, "Wife, kill the bird in my mouth for me." The woman struck, but missed her blow, and hit the wagoner right on his head, so that he fell dead. But the sparrow flew up and away.

THE LITTLE PEASANT

THERE WAS a certain village where no one lived but really rich peasants, and just one poor one, whom they called the little peasant. He had not even so much as a cow, and still less money to buy one, and yet he and his wife did so wish to have one. One day he said to her, "Hark you, I have a good thought, there is our cousin the carpenter, he shall make us a wooden calf, and paint it brown, so that it looks like any other, and in time it will certainly get big and be a cow." The woman also liked the idea, and their cousin the carpenter cut and planed the calf, and painted it as it ought to be, and made it with its head hanging down as if it were eating.

Next morning when the cows were being driven out, the little peasant called the cowherd in and said, "Look, I have a little calf there, but it is

still small and has still to be carried." The cowherd said, "All right," and took it in his arms and carried it to the pasture, and set it among the grass. The little calf always remained standing like one which was eating, and the cowherd said, "It will soon run alone, just look how it eats already!" At night when he was going to drive the herd home again, he said to the calf, "If you can stand there and eat your fill, you can also go on your four legs; I don't care to drag you home again in my arms." But the little peasant stood at his door, and waited for his little calf, and when the cowherd drove the cows through the village, and the calf was missing, he inquired where it was. The cowherd answered, "It is still standing out there eating. It would not stop and come with us." But the little peasant said, "Oh, but I must have my beast back again." Then they went back to the meadow together, but someone had stolen the calf, and it was gone. The cowherd said, "It must have run away." The peasant, however, said, "Don't tell me that," and led the cowherd before the mayor, who for his carelessness condemned him to give the peasant a cow for the calf which had run away.

And now the little peasant and his wife had the cow for which they had so long wished, and they were heartily glad, but they had no food for it, and could give it nothing to eat, so it soon had to be killed. They salted the flesh, and the peasant went into the town and wanted to sell the skin there, so that he might buy a new calf with the proceeds. On the way he passed by a mill, and there sat a raven with broken wings, and out of pity he took him and wrapped him in the skin. As, however, the weather grew so bad and there was a storm of rain and wind, he could go no farther, and turned back to the mill and begged for shelter. The miller's wife was alone in the house, and said to the peasant, "Lay yourself on the straw there," and gave him a slice of bread with cheese on it. The peasant ate it, and lay down with his skin beside him, and the woman thought, "He is tired and has gone to sleep." In the meantime came the parson; the miller's wife received him well, and said, "My husband is out, so we will have a feast." The peasant listened, and when he heard about feasting he was vexed that he had been forced to make shift with a slice of bread with cheese on it. Then the woman served up four different things--roast meat, salad, cakes, and wine.

Just as they were about to sit down and eat, there was a knocking outside. The woman said, "Oh, heavens! It is my husband!" She quickly hid the roast meat inside the tiled stove, the wine under the pillow, the salad on the bed, the cakes under it, and the parson in the cupboard in the entrance. Then she opened the door for her husband, and said, "Thank heaven, you are back again! There is such a storm, it looks as if the world were coming to an end." The miller saw the peasant lying on the straw, and asked, "What is that fellow doing

there?" "Ah," said the wife, "the poor knave came in the storm and rain, and begged for shelter, so I gave him a bit of bread and cheese, and showed him where the straw was." The man said, "I have no objection, but be quick and get me something to eat." The woman said, "But I have nothing but bread and cheese." "I am contented with anything," replied the husband, "so far as I am concerned, bread and cheese will do," and looked at the peasant and said, "Come and eat some more with me." The peasant did not require to be invited twice, but got up and ate. After this the miller saw the skin in which the raven was, lying on the ground, and asked, "What have you there?" The peasant answered, "I have a soothsayer inside it." "Can he foretell anything to me?" said the miller. "Why not?" answered the peasant, "but he only says four things, and the fifth he keeps to himself." The miller was curious, and said, "Let him foretell something for once." Then the peasant pinched the raven's head, so that he croaked and made a noise like krr, krr. The miller said, "What did he say?" The peasant answered, "In the first place, he says that there is some wine hidden under the pillow." "Bless me!" cried the miller, and went there and found the wine. "Now go on," said he. The peasant made the raven croak again, and said, "In the second place, he says that there is some roast meat in the tiled stove." "Upon my word!" cried the miller, and went thither, and found the roast meat. The peasant made the raven prophesy still more, and said, "Thirdly, he says that there is some salad on the bed." "That would be a fine thing!" cried the miller, and went there and found the salad. At last, the peasant pinched the raven once more till he croaked, and said, "Fourthly, he says that there are some cakes under the bed." "That would be a fine thing!" cried the miller, and looked there, and found the cakes.

And now the two sat down to the table together, but the miller's wife was frightened to death, and went to bed and took all the keys with her. The miller would have liked much to know the fifth, but the little peasant said, "First, we will quickly eat the four things, for the fifth is something bad." So they ate, and after that they bargained how much the miller was to give for the fifth prophecy, until they agreed on three hundred thalers. Then the peasant once more pinched the raven's head till he croaked loudly. The miller asked, "What did he say?" The peasant replied, "He says that the Devil is hiding outside there in the cupboard in the entrance." The miller said, "The Devil must go out," and opened the house door; then the woman was forced to give up the keys, and the peasant unlocked the cupboard. The parson ran out as fast as he could, and the miller said, "It was true; I saw the black rascal with my own eyes." The peasant, however, made off next morning by daybreak with the three hundred thalers.

At home the small peasant gradually launched out; he built a beautiful house, and the peasants said, "The small peasant has certainly been to the place where golden snow falls, and people carry the gold home in shovels." Then the small peasant was brought before the Mayor, and bidden to say from whence his wealth came. He answered, "I sold my cow's skin in the town, for three hundred thalers." When the peasants heard that, they too wished to enjoy this great profit, and ran home, killed all their cows, and stripped off their skins in order to sell them in the town to the greatest advantage. The Mayor, however, said, "But my servant must go first." When she came to the merchant in the town, he did not give her more than two thalers for a skin, and when the others came, he did not give them so much, and said, "What can I do with all these skins?"

Then the peasants were vexed that the small peasant should have thus overreached them, wanted to take vengeance on him, and accused him of this treachery before the Mayor. The innocent little peasant was unanimously sentenced to death, and was to be rolled into the water, in a barrel pierced full of holes. He was led forth, and a priest was brought who was to say a mass for his soul. The others were all obliged to retire to a distance, and when the peasant looked at the priest, he recognized the man who had been with the miller's wife. He said to him, "I set you free from the cupboard, set me free from the barrel." At this same moment up came, with a flock of sheep, the very shepherd who as the peasant knew had long been wishing to be Mayor, so he cried with all his might, "No, I will not do it; if the whole world insists on it, I will not do it!" The shepherd hearing that, came up to him, and asked, "What are you about? What is it that you will not do?" The peasant said, "They want to make me Mayor, if I will but put myself in the barrel, but I will not do it." The shepherd said, "If nothing more than that is needful in order to be Mayor, I would get into the barrel at once." The peasant said, "If you will get in, you will be Mayor." The shepherd was willing, and got in, and the peasant shut the top down on him; then he took the shepherd's flock for himself, and drove it away. The parson went to the crowd, and declared that the mass had been said. Then they came and rolled the barrel towards the water. When the barrel began to roll, the shepherd cried, "I am quite willing to be Mayor." They believed no otherwise than that it was the peasant who was saying this, and answered, "That is what we intend, but first you shall look about you a little down below there," and they rolled the barrel down into the water.

After that the peasants went home, and as they were entering the village, the small peasant also came quietly in, driving a flock of sheep and looking quite contented. Then the peasants were astonished, and

said, "Peasant, from whence do you come? Have you come out of the water?" "Yes, truly," replied the peasant, "I sank deep, deep down, until at last I got to the bottom; I pushed the bottom out of the barrel, and crept out, and there were pretty meadows on which a number of lambs were feeding, and from thence I brought this flock away with me." Said the peasants, "Are there any more there?" "Oh, yes," said he, "more than I could do anything with." Then the peasants made up their minds that they too would fetch some sheep for themselves, a flock apiece, but the Mayor said, "I come first." So they went to the water together, and just then there were some of the small fleecy clouds in the blue sky, which are called little lambs, and they were reflected in the water, whereupon the peasants cried, "We already see the sheep down below!" The Mayor pressed forward and said, "I will go down first, and look about me, and if things promise well I'll call you." So he jumped in; splash! went the water; he made a sound as if he were calling them, and the whole crowd plunged in after him as one man. Then the entire village was dead, and the small peasant, as sole heir, became a rich man.

GOSSIP WOLF AND THE FOX

THE SHE-WOLF brought forth a young one, and invited the fox to be godfather. "After all, he is a near relative of ours," said she, "he has a good understanding, and much talent; he can instruct my little son, and help him forward in the world." The fox, too, appeared quite honest, and said, "Worthy Mrs. Gossip, I thank you for the honor which you are doing me; I will, however, conduct myself in such a way that you shall be repaid for it." He enjoyed himself at the feast, and made merry; afterwards he said, "Dear Mrs. Gossip, it is our duty to take care of the child, it must have good food that it may be strong. I know a sheepfold from which we might fetch a nice morsel." The wolf was pleased with the ditty, and she went out with the fox to the farmyard. He pointed out the fold from afar, and said, "You will be able to creep in there without being seen, and in the meantime I will look about on the other side to see if I can pick up a chicken." He, however, did not go there, but sat down at the entrance to the forest, stretched his legs and rested. The she-wolf crept into the stable. A dog was lying there, and it made such a noise that the peasants came running out, caught Gossip Wolf, and poured a strong burning mixture, which had been prepared for washing, over her skin. At last she escaped, and dragged herself outside. There lay the fox, who pre-

tended to be full of complaints, and said, "Ah, dear Mistress Gossip, how ill I have fared, the peasants have fallen on me, and have broken every limb I have; if you do not want me to lie where I am and perish, you must carry me away." The she-wolf herself was only able to go away slowly, but she was in such concern about the fox that she took him on her back, and slowly carried him perfectly safe and sound to her house. Then the fox cried to her, "Farewell, dear Mistress Gossip, may the roasting you have had do you good," laughed heartily at her, and bounded off.

THE OLD MAN AND HIS GRANDSON

THERE WAS once a very old man, whose eyes had become dim, his ears dull of hearing, his knees trembled, and when he sat at table he could hardly hold the spoon, and spilled the broth upon the tablecloth or let it run out of his mouth. His son and his son's wife were disgusted at this, so the old grandfather at last had to sit in the corner behind the stove, and they gave him his food in an earthenware bowl, and not even enough of it. And he used to look towards the table with his eyes full of tears. Once, too, his trembling hands could not hold the bowl, and it fell to the ground and broke. The young wife scolded him, but he said nothing and only sighed. Then they bought him a wooden bowl for a few pennies, out of which he had to eat.

They were once sitting thus when the little grandson of four years old began to gather together some bits of wood upon the ground. "What are you doing there?" asked the father. "I am making a little trough," answered the child, "for father and mother to eat out of when I am big."

The man and his wife looked at each other for a while, and presently began to cry. Then they took the old grandfather to the table, and henceforth always let him eat with them, and likewise said nothing if he did spill a little of anything.

THE TWO TRAVELERS

HILL AND VALE do not come together, but the children of men do, good and bad. In this way a shoemaker and a tailor once met with each other in their travels. The tailor was a handsome little fellow who

was always merry and full of enjoyment. He saw the shoemaker coming toward him from the other side, and as he observed by his bag what kind of a trade he plied, he sang a little mocking song to him,

*"Sew me the seam,
Draw me the thread,
Spread it over with pitch,
Knock the nail on the head."*

The shoemaker, however, could not endure a joke; he pulled a face as if he had drunk vinegar, and made a gesture as if he were about to seize the tailor by the throat. But the little fellow began to laugh, reached him his bottle, and said, "No harm was meant, take a drink, and swallow your anger down." The shoemaker took a very hearty drink, and the storm on his face began to clear away. He gave the bottle back to the tailor, and said, "I spoke civilly to you; one speaks well after much drinking, but not after much thirst. Shall we travel together?" "All right," answered the tailor, "if only it suits you to go into a big town where there is no lack of work." "That is just where I want to go," answered the shoemaker. "In a small nest there is nothing to earn, and in the country, people like to go barefoot." They traveled therefore onward together, and always set one foot before the other like a weasel in the snow.

Both of them had time enough, but little to bite and to break. When they reached a town they went about and paid their respects to the tradesmen, and because the tailor looked so lively and merry, and had such pretty red cheeks, everyone gave him work willingly, and when luck was good the master's daughters gave him a kiss beneath the porch, as well. When he again fell in with the shoemaker, the tailor had always the most in his bundle. The ill-tempered shoemaker made a wry face, and thought, "The greater the rascal the more the luck," but the tailor began to laugh and to sing, and shared all he got with his comrade. If a couple of pennies jingled in his pockets, he ordered good cheer, and thumped the table in his joy till the glasses danced, and it was lightly come, lightly go, with him.

When they had traveled for some time, they came to a great forest through which passed the road to the capital. Two foot-paths, however, led through it, one of which was a seven days' journey, and the other only two, but neither of the travelers knew which way was the short one. They seated themselves beneath an oak tree, and took counsel together how they should forecast, and for how many days they should provide themselves with bread. The shoemaker said, "One must look before one leaps, I will take with me bread for a week." "What!" said the tailor, "drag bread for seven days on one's back like a beast of

burden, and not be able to look about. I shall trust in God, and not trouble myself about anything! The money I have in my pocket is as good in summer as in winter, but in hot weather bread gets dry, and mouldy into the bargain; even my coat does not go as far as it might. Besides, why should we not find the right way? Bread for two days, and that's enough." Each, therefore, bought his own bread, and then they tried their luck in the forest.

It was as quiet there as in a church. No wind stirred, no brook murmured, no bird sang, and through the thickly leaved branches no sunbeam forced its way. The shoemaker spoke never a word, the heavy bread weighed down his back until the perspiration streamed down his cross and gloomy face. The tailor, however, was quite merry, he jumped about, whistled on a leaf, or sang a song, and thought to himself, "God in Heaven must be pleased to see me so happy."

This lasted two days, but on the third the forest would not come to an end, and the tailor had eaten up all his bread, so after all his heart sank down a yard deeper. In the meantime he did not lose courage, but relied on God and on his luck. On the third day he lay down hungry in the evening under a tree, and rose again next morning hungry still; so also passed the fourth day, and when the shoemaker seated himself on a fallen tree and devoured his dinner, the tailor was only a looker-on. If he begged for a little piece of bread the other laughed mockingly, and said, "You have always been so merry, now you can try for once what it is to be sad: the birds which sing too early in the morning are struck by the hawk in the evening." in short he was pitiless. But on the fifth morning the poor tailor could no longer stand up, and was hardly able to utter one word for weakness; his cheeks were white, and his eyes red. Then the shoemaker said to him, "I will give you a bit of bread today, but in return for it, I will put out your right eye." The unhappy tailor, who still wished to save his life, could not do it in any other way; he wept once more with both eyes, and then held them out, and the shoemaker, who had a heart of stone, put out his right eye with a sharp knife. The tailor called to remembrance what his mother had formerly said to him when he had been eating secretly in the pantry. "Eat what one can, and suffer what one must." When he had consumed his dearly bought bread, he got on his legs again, forgot his misery and comforted himself with the thought that he could always see enough with one eye. But on the sixth day, hunger made itself felt again, and gnawed him almost to the heart. In the evening he fell down by a tree, and on the seventh morning he could not raise himself up for faintness, and death was close at hand. Then said the shoemaker, "I will show mercy and give you bread once more, but you shall not have it for nothing, I shall put out your other eye for it." And now the tailor felt

how thoughtless his life had been, prayed to God for forgiveness, and said, "Do what you will, I will bear what I must, but remember that our Lord God does not always look on passively, and that an hour will come when the evil deed which you have done to me, and which I have not deserved of you, will be requited. When times were good with me, I shared what I had with you. My trade is of that kind that each stitch must always be exactly like the other. If I no longer have my eyes and can sew no more I must go a-begging. At any rate do not leave me here alone when I am blind, or I shall die of hunger." The shoemaker, however, who had driven God out of his heart, took the knife and put out his left eye. Then he gave him a bit of bread to eat, held out a stick to him, and drew him on behind him.

When the sun went down, they got out of the forest, and before them in the open country stood the gallows. Thither the shoemaker guided the blind tailor, and then left him alone and went his way. Weariness, pain, and hunger made the wretched man fall asleep, and he slept the whole night. When day dawned he awoke, but knew not where he lay. Two poor sinners were hanging on the gallows, and a crow sat on the head of each of them. Then one of the men who had been hanged began to speak, and said, "Brother, are you awake?" "Yes, I am awake," answered the second. "Then I will tell you something," said the first; "the dew which this night has fallen down over us from the gallows, gives everyone who washes himself with it his eyes again. If blind people did but know this how many would regain their sight who do not believe that to be possible."

When the tailor heard that, he took his pocket handkerchief, pressed it on the grass, and when it was moist with dew, washed the sockets of his eyes with it. Immediately was fulfilled what the man on the gallows had said, and a couple of healthy new eyes filled the sockets. It was not long before the tailor saw the sun rise behind the mountains; in the plain before him lay the great royal city with its magnificent gates and hundred towers, and the golden balls and crosses which were on the spires began to shine. He could distinguish every leaf on the trees, saw the birds which flew past, and the midges which danced in the air. He took a needle out of his pocket, and as he could thread it as well as ever he had done, his heart danced with delight. He threw himself on his knees, thanked God for the mercy he had shown him, and said his morning prayer. He did not forget also to pray for the poor sinners who were hanging there swinging against each other in the wind like the pendulums of clocks. Then he took his bundle on his back and soon forgot the pain of heart he had endured, and went on his way singing and whistling.

The first thing he met was a brown foal running about the fields at

large. He caught it by the mane, and wanted to spring on it and ride into the town. The foal, however, begged to be set free. "I am still too young," it said, "even a light tailor such as you are would break my back in two—let me go till I have grown strong. A time may perhaps come when I may reward you for it."

"Run off," said the tailor, "I see you are still a giddy thing." He gave it a touch with a switch over its back, whereupon it kicked up its hind legs for joy, leapt over hedges and ditches, and galloped away into the open country.

But the little tailor had eaten nothing since the day before. "The sun to be sure fills my eyes," said he, "but the bread does not fill my mouth. The first thing that comes across me and is even half eatable will have to suffer for it." In the meantime a stork stepped solemnly over the meadow towards him. "Halt, halt!" cried the tailor, and seized him by the leg; "I don't know if you are good to eat or not, but my hunger leaves me no great choice. I must cut your head off, and roast you." "Don't do that," replied the stork; "I am a sacred bird which brings mankind great profit, and no one does me an injury. Leave me my life, and I may do you good in some other way." "Well, be off, Cousin Longlegs," said the tailor. The stork rose up, let its long legs hang down, and flew gently away.

"What's to be the end of this?" said the tailor to himself at last, "my hunger grows greater and greater, and my stomach more and more empty. Whatever comes in my way now is lost." At this moment he saw a couple of young ducks which were on a pond come swimming towards him. "You come just at the right moment," said he, and laid hold of one of them and was about to wring its neck. On this an old duck which was hidden among the reeds, began to scream loudly, and swam to him with open beak, and begged him urgently to spare her dear children. "Can you not imagine," said she, "how your mother would mourn if anyone wanted to carry you off, and give you your finishing stroke?" "Only be quiet," said the good-tempered tailor, "you shall keep your children," and put the prisoner back into the water.

When he turned round, he was standing in front of an old tree which was partly hollow, and saw some wild bees flying in and out of it. "There I shall at once find the reward of my good deed," said the tailor. "the honey will refresh me." But the Queen-bee came out, threatened him and said, "If you touch my people, and destroy my nest, our stings shall pierce your skin like ten thousand red-hot needles. But if you will leave us in peace and go your way, we will do you a service for it another time."

The little tailor saw that here also nothing was to be done. "Three dishes empty and nothing on the fourth is a bad dinner!" He dragged

himself therefore with his starved-out stomach into the town, and as it was just striking twelve, all was ready-cooked for him in the inn, and he was able to sit down at once to dinner. When he was satisfied he said, "Now I will get to work." He went round the town, sought a master, and soon found a good situation. As, however, he had thoroughly learned his trade, it was not long before he became famous, and everyone wanted to have his new coat made by the little tailor, whose importance increased daily. "I can go no further in skill," said he, "and yet things improve every day." At last the King appointed him court-tailor.

But how things do happen in the world! On the very same day his former comrade the shoemaker also became court-shoemaker. When the latter caught sight of the tailor, and saw that he had once more two healthy eyes, his conscience troubled him. "Before he takes revenge on me," thought he to himself, "I must dig a pit for him." He, however, who digs a pit for another, falls into it himself. In the evening when work was over and it had grown dusk, he stole to the King and said, "Lord King, the tailor is an arrogant fellow and has boasted that he will get the gold crown back again which was lost in ancient times." "That would please me very much," said the King, and he caused the tailor to be brought before him next morning, and ordered him to get the crown back again, or to leave the town for ever. "Oho!" thought the tailor, "a rogue gives more than he has got. If the sully King wants me to do what can be done by no one, I will not wait till morning, but will go out of the town at once, today." He packed up his bundle, therefore, but when he was without the gate he could not help being sorry to give up his good fortune, and turn his back on the town in which all had gone so well with him. He came to the pond where he had made the acquaintance of the ducks; at that very moment the old one whose young ones he had spared, was sitting there by the shore, pluming herself with her beak. She knew him again instantly, and asked why he was hanging his head so? "You will not be surprised when you hear what has befallen me," replied the tailor, and told her his fate. "If that be all," said the duck, "we can help you. The crown fell into the water, and lies down below at the bottom; we will soon bring it up again for you. In the meantime just spread out your handkerchief on the bank." She dived down with her twelve young ones, and in five minutes she was up again and sat with the crown resting on her wings, and the twelve young ones were swimming round about and had put their beaks under it, and were helping to carry it. They swam to the shore and put the crown on the handkerchief. No one can imagine how magnificent the crown was; when the sun shone on it, it gleamed like a hundred thousand carbuncles. The tailor tied his handkerchief together by the

four corners, and carried it to the King, who was full of joy, and put a gold chain round the tailor's neck.

When the shoemaker saw that one stroke had failed, he contrived a second, and went to the King and said, "Lord King, the tailor has become insolent again; he boasts that he will copy in wax the whole of the royal palace, with everything that pertains to it, loose or fast, inside and out." The King sent for the tailor and ordered him to copy in wax the whole of the royal palace, with everything that pertained to it, movable or immovable, within and without, and if he did not succeed in doing this, or if so much as one nail on the wall were wanting, he should be imprisoned for his whole life under ground.

The tailor thought, "It gets worse and worse! No one can endure that!" and threw his bundle on his back, and went forth. When he came to the hollow tree, he sat down and hung his head. The bees came flying out, and the Queen-bee asked him if he had a stiff neck, since he held his head so awry? "Alas, no," answered the tailor, "something quite different weighs me down." and he told her what the King had demanded of him. The bees began to buzz and hum among themselves, and the Queen-bee said, "Just go home again, but come back tomorrow at this time, and bring a large sheet with you, and then all will be well." So he turned back again, but the bees flew to the royal palace and straight into it through the open windows, crept round about into every corner, and inspected everything most carefully. Then they hurried back and modeled the palace in wax with such rapidity that anyone looking on would have thought it was growing before his eyes. By the evening all was ready, and when the tailor came next morning, the whole of the splendid building was there, and not one nail in the wall or tile of the roof was wanting, and it was delicate withal, and white as snow, and smelled sweet as honey. The tailor wrapped it carefully in his cloth and took it to the King, who could not admire it enough, placed it in his largest hall, and in return for it presented the tailor with a large stone house.

The shoemaker, however, did not give up, but went for the third time to the King and said, "Lord King, it has come to the tailor's ears that no water will spring up in the courtyard of the castle, and he has boasted that it shall rise up in the midst of the courtyard to a man's height and be clear as crystal." Then the King ordered the tailor to be brought before him and said, "If a stream of water does not rise in my courtyard by tomorrow as you have promised, the executioner shall in that very place make you shorter by the head." The poor tailor did not take long to think about it, but hurried out to the gate, and because this time it was a matter of life and death to him, tears rolled down his face. While he was thus going forth full of sorrow, the foal

to which he had formerly given its liberty, and which had now become a beautiful chestnut horse, came leaping toward him. "The time has come," it said to the tailor, "when I can repay you for your good deed. I know already what is needful to you, but you shall soon have help; get on me, my back can carry two such as you." The tailor's courage came back to him; he jumped up in one bound, and the horse went full speed into the town, and right up to the courtyard of the castle. It galloped as quick as lightning thrice round it, and at the third time it fell violently down. At the same instant, however, there was a terrific clap of thunder, a fragment of earth in the middle of the courtyard sprang like a cannon ball into the air, and over the castle, and directly after it a jet of water rose as high as a man on horseback, and the water was as pure as crystal, and the sunbeams began to dance on it. When the King saw that he arose in amazement, and went and embraced the tailor in the sight of all men.

But good fortune did not last long. The King had daughters in plenty, one still prettier than the other, but he had no son. So the malicious shoemaker betook himself for the fourth time to the King, and said, "Lord King, the tailor has not given up his arrogance. He has now boasted that if he liked, he could cause a son to be brought to the Lord King through the air." The King commanded the tailor to be summoned, and said, "If you cause a son to be brought to me within nine days, you shall have my eldest daughter to wife." "The reward is indeed great," thought the little tailor; "one would willingly do something for it, but the cherries grow too high for me, if I climb for them, the bough will break beneath me, and I shall fall."

He went home, seated himself cross-legged on his work-table, and thought over what was to be done. "It can't be managed," cried he at last, "I will go away; after all I can't live in peace here." He tied up his bundle and hurried away to the gate. When he got to the meadow, he perceived his old friend the stork, who was walking backward, and forward like a philosopher. Sometimes he stood still, took a frog into close consideration, and at length swallowed it down. The stork came to him and greeted him. "I see," he began, "that you have your pack on your back. Why are you leaving the town?" The tailor told him what the King had required of him, and how he could not perform it, and lamented his misfortune. "Don't let your hair grow gray about that," said the stork, "I will help you out of your difficulty. For a long time now, I have carried the children in swaddling clothes into the town, so for once in a way I can fetch a little prince out of the well. Go home and be easy. In nine days from this time repair to the royal palace, and there will I come." The little tailor went home, and at the appointed time was at the castle. It was not long before the stork came

flying thither and tapped at the window. The tailor opened it, and Cousin Longlegs came carefully in, and walked with solemn steps over the smooth marble pavement. He had a baby in his beak that was as lovely as an angel, and stretched out its little hands to the Queen. The stork laid it in her lap, and she caressed it and kissed it, and was beside herself with delight. Before the stork flew away, he took his traveling bag off his back and handed it over to the Queen. In it there were little paper parcels with colored sweetmeats, and they were divided among the little princesses. The eldest, however, had none of them, but got the merry tailor for a husband. "It seems to me," said he, "just as if I had won the highest prize. My mother was right after all, she always said that whoever trusts in God and only has good luck, can never fail."

The shoemaker had to make the shoes in which the little tailor danced at the wedding festival, after which he was commanded to leave the town forever. The road to the forest led him to the gallows. Worn out with anger, rage, and the heat of the day, he threw himself down. When he had closed his eyes and was about to sleep, the two crows flew down from the heads of the men who were hanging there, and pecked his eyes out. In his madness he ran into the forest and must have died there of hunger, for no one has ever either seen him again or heard of him.

THE SHROUD

THERE WAS once a mother who had a little boy of seven years old, who was so handsome and lovable that no one could look at him without liking him, and she herself worshiped him above everything in the world. Now it so happened that he suddenly became ill, and God took him to himself; and for this the mother could not be comforted, and wept both day and night. But soon afterwards, when the child had been buried, it appeared by night in the places where it had sat and played during its life, and if the mother wept, it wept also, and when morning came it disappeared. As, however, the mother would not stop crying, it came one night, in the little white shroud in which it had been laid in its coffin, and with its wreath of flowers round its head, and stood on the bed at her feet, and said, "Oh, mother, do stop cryin', or I shall never fall asleep in my coffin, for my shroud will not dry because of all your tears, which fall upon it." The mother was afraid when she heard that, and wept no more. The next night the child came again. and

held a little light in its hand, and said, "Look, mother, my shroud is nearly dry, and I can rest in my grave." Then the mother gave her sorrow into God's keeping, and bore it quietly and patiently, and the child came no more, but slept in its little bed beneath the earth.

THE BRIGHT SUN BRINGS IT TO LIGHT

A TAILOR'S APPRENTICE was traveling about the world in search of work, and at one time he could find none, and his poverty was so great that he had not a farthing to live on. Presently he met a Jew on the road, and as he thought he would have a great deal of money about him, the tailor thrust God out of his heart, fell on the Jew, and said, "Give me your money, or I will strike you dead." Then said the Jew, "Grant me my life, I have no money but eight farthings." But the tailor said, "Money you have; and it shall be produced," and used violence and beat him until he was near death. And when the Jew was dying, the last words he said were, "The bright sun will bring it to light," and thereupon he died. The tailor's apprentice felt in his pockets and sought for money, but he found nothing but eight farthings, as the Jew had said. Then he took him up and carried him behind a clump of trees, and went onward to seek work. After he had traveled about a long while, he got work in a town with a master who had a pretty daughter, with whom he fell in love, and he married her, and lived in good and happy wedlock.

After a long time when he and his wife had two children, the wife's father and mother died, and the young people kept house alone. One morning, when the husband was sitting on the table before the window, his wife brought him his coffee, and when he had poured it out into the saucer, and was just going to drink, the sun shone on it and the reflection gleamed hither and thither on the wall above, and made circles on it. Then the tailor looked up and said, "Yes, it would like very much to bring it to light, and cannot!" The woman said, "Oh, dear husband, and what is that, then? What do you mean by that?" He answered, "I must not tell you." But she said, "If you love me, you must tell me," and used her most affectionate words, and said that no one should ever know it, and left him no rest. Then he told her how years ago, when he was traveling about seeking work and quite worn out and penniless, he had killed a Jew, and that in the last agonies of death, the Jew had spoken the words, "The bright sun will bring it to light." And now, the sun had just wanted to bring it to light, and had gleamed and

made circles on the wall, but had not been able to do it. After this, he again charged her particularly never to tell this, or he would lose his life, and she did promise. When, however, he had sat down to work again, she went to her great friend and confided the story to her, but she was never to repeat it to any human being, but before two days were over, the whole town knew it, and the tailor was brought to trial, and condemned. And thus, after all, the bright sun did bring it to light.

THE LAZY SPINNER

IN A CERTAIN VILLAGE there once lived a man and his wife, and the wife was so idle that she would never work at anything; whatever her husband gave her to spin, she did not get done, and what she did spin she did not wind, but let it all remain tangled in a heap. If the man scolded her, she was always ready with her tongue, and said, "Well, how should I wind it, when I have no reel? Just you go into the forest and get me one." "If that is all," said the man, "then I will go into the forest, and get some wood for making reels." Then the woman was afraid that if he had the wood he would make her a reel of it, and she would have to wind her yarn off, and then begin to spin again. She bethought herself a little, and then a lucky idea occurred to her, and she secretly followed the man into the forest, and when he had climbed into a tree to choose and cut the wood, she crept into the thicket below where he could not see her, and cried,

*"He who cuts wood for reels shall die,
And he who winds shall perish."*

The man listened, laid down his ax for a moment, and began to consider what that could mean. "Well," he said at last, "what can that have been; my ears must have been singing, I won't alarm myself for nothing." So he again seized the ax, and began to hew, then again there came a cry from below:

*"He who cuts wood for reels shall die,
And he who winds shall perish."*

He stopped, and felt afraid and alarmed, and pondered over the circumstance. But when a few moments had passed, he took heart again, and a third time he stretched out his hand for the ax, and began to cut. But someone called out a third time, and said loudly,

*"He who cuts wood for reels shall die,
And he who winds shall perish."*

That was enough for him, and all inclination had departed from him, so he hastily descended the tree, and set out on his way home. The woman ran as fast as she could by short-cuts, so as to get home first. So when he entered the parlor, she put on an innocent look as if nothing had happened, and said, "Well, have you brought a nice piece of wood for reels?" "No," said he, "I see very well that winding won't do," and told her what had happened to him in the forest, and from that time forth left her in peace about it. Nevertheless after some time, the man again began to complain of the disorder in the house. "Wife," said he, "it is really a shame that the spun yarn should lie there all tangled!" "I'll tell you what," said she, "as we still don't come by any reel, go you up into the loft, and I will stand down below, and will throw the yarn up to you, and you will throw it down to me, and so we shall get a skein after all." "Yes, that will do," said the man. So they did that, and when it was done, he said, "The yarn is in skeins, now it must be boiled." The woman was again distressed; she certainly said, "Yes, we will boil it next morning early," but she was secretly contriving another trick.

Early in the morning she got up, lighted a fire, and put the kettle on, only instead of the yarn, she put in a lump of tow, and let it boil. After that she went to the man who was still lying in bed, and said to him, "I must just go out, you must get up and look after the yarn which is in the kettle on the fire, but you must be at hand at once; mind that, for if the cock should happen to crow, and you are not attending to the yarn, it will become tow." The man was willing and took good care not to loiter. He got up as quickly as he could, and went into the kitchen. But when he reached the kettle and peeped in, he saw, to his horror, nothing but a lump of tow. Then the poor man was as still as a mouse, thinking he had neglected it, and was to blame, and in future said no more about yarn and spinning. But you yourself must admit that she was a hateful woman!

THE WHITE BRIDE AND THE BLACK BRIDE

A WOMAN was going about the unenclosed land with her daughter and her stepdaughter cutting fodder, when the Lord came walking towards them in the form of a poor man, and asked, "Which is the way into the village?" "If you want to know," said the mother, "seek it for yourself," and the daughter added, "If you are afraid you

will not find it, take a guide with you." But the stepdaughter said, "Poor man, I will take you there, come with me." Then God was angry with the mother and daughter, and turned his back on them, and wished that they should become as black as night and as ugly as sin. To the poor stepdaughter, however, God was gracious, and went with her, and when they were near the village, he said a blessing over her, and said, "Choose three things for yourself, and I will grant them to you." Then said the maiden, "I should like to be as beautiful and fair as the sun," and instantly she was white and fair as day. "Then I should like to have a purse of money which would never grow empty." That the Lord gave her also, but he said, "Do not forget what is best of all." Said she, "For my third wish, I desire, after my death, to inhabit the eternal kingdom of Heaven." That also was granted to her, and then the Lord left her. When the stepmother came home with her daughter, and they saw that they were both as black as coal and ugly, but that the stepdaughter was white and beautiful, wickedness increased still more in their hearts, and they thought of nothing else but how they could do her an injury. The stepdaughter, however, had a brother called Reginer, whom she loved much, and she told him all that had happened. Once Reginer said to her, "Dear sister, I will take your likeness, that I may continually see you before my eyes, for my love for you is so great that I should like always to look at you." Then she answered, "But, I pray, let no one see the picture." So he painted his sister and hung up the picture in his room; he, however, dwelt in the King's palace, for he was his coachman. Every day he went and stood before the picture, and thanked God for the happiness of having such a dear sister. Now it happened that the King whom he served, had just lost his wife, who had been so beautiful that no one could be found to compare with her, and on this account the King was in deep grief. The attendants about the court, however, remarked that the coachman stood daily before this beautiful picture, and they were jealous of him, so they informed the King. Then the latter ordered the picture to be brought to him, and when he saw that it was like his lost wife in every respect, except that it was still more beautiful, he fell mortally in love with it. He caused the coachman to be brought before him, and asked whom that portrait represented? The coachman said it was his sister, so the King resolved to take no one but her as his wife, and gave him a carriage and horses and splendid garments of cloth of gold, and sent him forth to fetch his chosen bride. When Reginer came on this errand, his sister was glad, but the black maiden was jealous of her good fortune, and grew angry above all measure, and said to her mother, "Of what use are all your arts to us now when you cannot procure such a piece of luck for me?" "Be quiet," said the old woman, "I will soon di-

vert it to you"—and by her arts of witchcraft, she so troubled the eyes of the coachman that he was half-blind, and she stopped the ears of the white maiden so that she was half-deaf. Then they got into the carriage, first the bride in her noble royal apparel, then the stepmother with her daughter, and Reginer sat on the box to drive. When they had been on the way for some time the coachman cried,

*"Cover thee well, my sister dear,
That the rain may not wet thee,
That the wind may not load thee with dust,
That thou may'st be fair and beautiful
When thou appearest before the King."*

The bride asked, "What is my dear brother saying?" "Ah," said the old woman, "he says that you ought to take off your golden dress and give it to your sister." Then she took it off, and put it on the black maiden, who gave her in exchange for it a shabby gray gown. They drove onward, and a short time afterwards, the brother again cried,

*"Cover thee well, my sister dear,
That the rain may not wet thee,
That the wind may not load thee with dust,
That thou may'st be fair and beautiful
When thou appearest before the King."*

The bride asked, "What is my dear brother saying?" "Ah," said the old woman, "he says that you ought to take off your golden hood and give it to your sister." So she took off the hood and put it on her sister, and sat with her own head uncovered. And they drove on farther. After a while, the brother once more cried,

*"Cover thee well, my sister dear,
That the rain may not wet thee,
That the wind may not load thee with dust,
That thou may'st be fair and beautiful
When thou appearest before the King."*

The bride asked, "What is my dear brother saying?" "Ah," said the old woman, "he says you must look out of the carriage." They were, however, just on a bridge, which crossed deep water. When the bride stood up and leaned forward out of the carriage, they both pushed her out, and she fell into the middle of the water. At the same moment that she sank, a snow-white duck arose out of the mirror-smooth water, and swam down the river. The brother had observed nothing of it, and drove the carriage on until they reached the court. Then he took the black maiden to the King as his sister, and thought she really was so, because his eyes were dim, and he saw the golden garments glittering.

When the King saw the boundless ugliness of his intended bride, he was very angry, and ordered the coachman to be thrown into a pit which was full of adders and nests of snakes. The old witch, however, knew so well how to flatter the King and deceive his eyes by her arts, that he kept her and her daughter until she appeared quite endurable to him, and he really married her.

One evening when the black bride was sitting on the King's knee, a white duck came swimming up the gutter to the kitchen, and said to the kitchen boy, "Boy, light a fire, that I may warm my feathers." The kitchen boy did it, and lighted a fire on the hearth. Then came the duck and sat down by it, and shook herself and smoothed her feathers to rights with her bill. While she was thus sitting and enjoying herself, she asked, "What is my brother Reginer doing?" The scullery boy replied, "He is imprisoned in the pit with adders and with snakes." Then she asked, "What is the black witch doing in the house?" The boy answered, "She is loved by the King and happy."

"May God have mercy on him," said the duck, and swam forth by the sink.

The next night she came again and put the same questions, and the third night also. Then the kitchen boy could bear it no longer, and went to the King and disclosed everything to him. The King, however, wanted to see it for himself, and next evening went thither, and when the duck thrust her head in through the sink, he took his sword and cut through her neck, and suddenly she changed into a most beautiful maiden, exactly like the picture, which her brother had made of her. The King was full of joy, and as she stood there quite wet, he caused splendid apparel to be brought and had her clothed in it. Then she told how she had been betrayed by cunning and falsehood, and at last thrown down into the water, and her first request was that her brother should be brought forth from the pit of snakes, and when the King had fulfilled this request, he went into the chamber where the old witch was, and asked, What does she deserve who does this and that? and related what had happened. Then was she so blinded that she was aware of nothing and said, "She deserves to be stripped naked, and put into a barrel with nails, and that a horse should be harnessed to the barrel, and the horse sent all over the world." All of which was done to her, and to her black daughter. But the King married the white and beautiful bride, and rewarded her faithful brother, and made him a rich and distinguished man.

KNOIST AND HIS THREE SONS

BETWEEN Werrel and Soist there lived a man whose name was Knoist, and he had three sons. One was blind, the other lame, and the third stark naked. One day they went into a field, and there they saw a hare. The blind one shot it, the lame one caught it, the naked one put it in his pocket. Then they came to a mighty big lake, on which there were three boats, one sailed, one sank, the third had no bottom to it. They all three got into the one with no bottom to it. Then they came to a mighty big forest in which there was a mighty big tree; in the tree was a mighty big chapel—in the chapel was a sexton made of beechwood and a boxwood parson, who dealt out holy water with cudgels.

*"How truly happy is that one
Who can from holy water run!"*

THE DONKEY

ONCE THERE LIVED a King and a Queen, who were rich, and had everything they wanted, but no children. The Queen lamented over this day and night, and said, "I am like a field on which nothing grows." At last God gave her her wish, but when the child came into the world, it did not look like a human child, but was a little donkey. When the mother saw that, her lamentations and outcries began in real earnest; she said she would far rather have had no child at all than have a donkey, and that they were to throw it into the water that the fish might devour it. But the King said, "No, since God has sent him he shall be my son and heir, and after my death sit on the royal throne, and wear the crown." The donkey, therefore, was brought up and grew bigger, and his ears grew up beautifully high and straight. He was, however, of a merry disposition, jumped about, played and had especial pleasure in music, so that he went to a celebrated musician and said, "Teach me your art, that I may play the lute as well as you do." "Ah, dear little master," answered the musician, "that would come very hard to you, your fingers are certainly not suited to it, and are far too big. I am afraid the strings would not last." No excuses were of any use. The donkey was determined to play the lute; he was persevering and industrious, and at last learned to do it as well as the master himself.

The young lordling once went out walking full of thought and came to a well; he looked into it and in the mirror-clear water saw his donkey's form. He was so distressed about it that he went out into the wide world and only took with him one faithful companion. They traveled up and down, and at last they came into a kingdom where an old King reigned who had an only but wonderfully beautiful daughter. The donkey said, "Here we will stay," knocked at the gate, and cried, "A guest is without—open, that he may enter." As, however, the gate was not opened, he sat down, took his lute and played it in the most delightful manner with his two fore-feet. Then the doorkeeper opened his eyes most wonderfully wide, and ran to the King and said, "Outside by the gate sits a young donkey which plays the lute as well as an experienced master!" "Then let the musician come to me," said the King. When, however, a donkey came in, everyone began to laugh at the lute player. And now the donkey was to sit down and eat with the servants. But he was unwilling, and said, "I am no common stable ass, I am a noble one." Then they said, "If that is what you are, seat yourself with the soldiers." "No," said he, "I will sit by the King." The King smiled, and said good-humoredly, "Yes, it shall be as you will, little ass, come here to me." Then he asked, "Little ass, how does my daughter please you?" The donkey turned his head toward her, looked at her, nodded and said, "I like her above measure, I have never yet seen anyone so beautiful as she is." "Well, then, you shall sit next to her too," said the King. "That is exactly what I wish," said the donkey, and he placed himself by her side, ate and drank, and knew how to behave himself daintily and cleanly. When the noble beast had stayed a long time at the King's court, he thought, "What good does all this do me? I shall still have to go home again." He let his head hang sadly, and went to the King and asked for his dismissal. But the King had grown fond of him, and said, "Little ass, what ails you? You look as sour as a jug of vinegar, I will give you what you want. Do you want gold?" "No," said the donkey, and shook his head. "Do you want jewels and rich dress?" "No." "Do you wish for half my kingdom?" "Indeed, no." Then said the King, "If I did but know what would make you content. Will you have my pretty daughter to wife?" "Ah, yes," said the ass, "I should indeed like her," and all at once he became quite merry and full of happiness, for that was exactly what he was wishing for. So a great and splendid wedding was held. In the evening, when the bride and bridegroom were led into their bedroom, the King wanted to know if the ass would behave well, and ordered a servant to hide himself there. When they were both within, the bridegroom bolted the door, looked around, and as he believed that they were quite alone, he suddenly threw off his ass' skin, and stood there in the form of a handsome

royal youth. "Now," said he, "you see who I am, and see also that I am not unworthy of you." Then the bride was glad, and kissed him, and loved him dearly. When morning came, he jumped up, put his animal's skin on again, and no one could have guessed what kind of a form was hidden beneath it. Soon came the old King, "Ah," cried he, "is the little ass merry? But surely you are sad," said he to his daughter, "that you have not got a proper man for your husband?" "Oh, no, dear father, I love him as well as if he were the handsomest in the world, and I will keep him as long as I live." The King was surprised, but the servant who had concealed himself came and revealed everything to him. The King said, "That cannot be true." "Then watch yourself the next night, and you will see it with your own eyes; and hark you, lord King, if you were to take his skin away and throw it in the fire, he would be forced to show himself in his true shape." "Thy advice is good," said the King, and at night when they were asleep, he stole in, and when he got to the bed he saw by the light of the moon a noble-looking youth lying there, and the skin lay stretched on the ground. So he took it away, and had a great fire lighted outside, and threw the skin into it, and remained by it himself until it was all burned to ashes. As, however, he was anxious to know how the robbed man would behave himself, he stayed awake the whole night and watched. When the youth had slept his sleep out, he got up by the first light of morning, and wanted to put on the ass' skin, but it was not to be found. On this he was alarmed, and, full of grief and anxiety, said, "Now I shall have to contrive to escape." But when he went out, there stood the King, who said, "My son, where do you go in such haste? What have you in your mind? Stay here, you are such a handsome man, you shall not go away from me. I will now give you half my kingdom, and after my death you shall have the whole of it." "Then I hope that what begins so well may end well, and I will stay with you," said the youth. And the old man gave him half the kingdom, and in a year's time, when he died, the youth had the whole, and after the death of his father he had another kingdom as well, and lived in all magnificence.

THE UNGRATEFUL SON

A MAN and his wife were once sitting by the door of their house, and they had a roasted chicken set before them, and were about to eat it together. Then the man saw that his aged father was coming,

and hastily took the chicken and hid it, for he would not permit him to have any of it. The old man came, took a drink, and went away. Now the son wanted to put the roasted chicken on the table again, but when he took it up, it had become a great toad, which jumped into his face and sat there and never went away again, and if any one wanted to take it off, it looked venomously at him as if it would jump in his face, so that no one would venture to touch it. And the ungrateful son was forced to feed the toad every day, or else it fed itself on his face; and thus he went about the world without knowing rest.

THE SHEPHERD BOY

THERE WAS once a shepherd boy whose fame spread far and wide because of the wise answers which he gave to every question. The King of the country heard of it likewise, but did not believe it, and sent for the boy. Then he said to him, "If you can give me an answer to three questions which I will ask, I will look on you as my own child, and you shall dwell with me in my royal palace." The boy said, "What are the three questions?" The King said, "The first is, how many drops of water are there in the ocean?" The shepherd boy answered, "Lord King, if you will have all the rivers on earth dammed up so that not a single drop runs from them into the sea until I have counted it, I will tell you how many drops there are in the sea." The King said, "The next question is, how many stars are there in the sky?" The shepherd boy said, "Give me a great sheet of white paper," and then he made so many fine points on it with a pen that they could scarcely be seen, and it was all but impossible to count them; any one who looked at them would have lost his sight. Then he said, "There are as many stars in the sky as there are points on the paper; just count them." But no one was able to do it. The King said, "The third question is, how many seconds of time are there in eternity?" Then said the shepherd boy, "In Lower Pomerania is the Diamond Mountain, which is two miles and a half high, two miles and a half wide, and two miles and a half in depth; every hundred years a little bird comes and sharpens its beak on it, and when the whole mountain is worn away by this, then the first second of eternity will be over."

The King said, "You have answered the three questions like a wise man, and shall henceforth dwell with me in my royal palace, and I will regard you as my own child."

THE STAR-MONEY

ONCE THERE WAS a little girl whose father and mother were dead, and she was so poor that she no longer had any little room to live in, or bed to sleep in, and at last she had nothing else but the clothes she was wearing and a little bit of bread in her hand which some charitable soul had given her. She was, however, good and pious. And as she was thus forsaken by all the world, she went forth into the open country, trusting in God. Then a poor man met her, who said, "Give me something to eat, I am so hungry!" She reached him the whole of her piece of bread, and said, "May God bless it to your use," and went onward. Then came a child who moaned and said, "My head is so cold. give me something to cover it with." So she took off her hood and gave it to him; and when she had walked a little farther, she met another child who had no jacket and was frozen with cold. Then she gave it her own; and a little farther on one begged for a frock, and she gave away that also. At length she got into a forest and it had already become dark, and there came yet another child, and asked for a little shirt, and the good little girl thought to herself, "It is a dark night and no one sees you, you can very well give your little shirt away," and took it off, and gave away that also. And as she so stood, and had not one single thing left, suddenly some stars from heaven fell down, and they were nothing else but hard smooth pieces of money, and although she had just given her little shirt away, she had a new one which was of the very finest linen. Then she gathered together the money into this, and was rich all the days of her life.

THE STOLEN FARTHING

FATHER was one day sitting at dinner with his wife and his children, and a good friend who had come on a visit was with them. And as they thus sat, and it was striking twelve o'clock, the stranger saw the door open, and a very pale child dressed in snow-white clothes came in. It did not look around, and it did not speak; but went straight into the next room. Soon afterwards it came back, and went out at the door again in the same quiet manner. On the second and on the third day, it came also exactly in the same way. At last the stranger asked the father to whom the beautiful child that went into the next room

every day at noon belonged? "I have never seen it," said he, neither did he know to whom it could belong. The next day when it again came, the stranger pointed it out to the father, who however did not see it, and the mother and the children also all saw nothing. On this the stranger got up, went to the door, opened it a little, and peeped in. Then he saw the child sitting on the ground, and digging and seeking about industriously among the crevices between the boards of the floor, but when it saw the stranger, it disappeared. He now told what he had seen and described the child exactly, and the mother recognized it, and said, "Ah, it is my dear child who died a month ago." They took up the boards and found two farthings which the child had once received from its mother that it might give them to a poor man; it, however, had thought, "You can buy yourself a biscuit for that," and had kept the farthings, and hidden them in the openings between the boards; and therefore it had had no rest in its grave, and had come every day at noon to seek for these farthings. The parents gave the money at once to a poor man, and after that the child was never seen again.

BRIDES ON TRIAL

THERE WAS once a young shepherd who wished much to marry, and was acquainted with three sisters who were all equally pretty, so that it was difficult to him to make a choice, and he could not decide to give the preference to any one of them. Then he asked his mother for advice, and she said, "Invite all three, and set some cheese before them, and watch how they eat it." The youth did so: the first, however, swallowed the cheese with the rind on; the second hastily cut the rind off the cheese, but she cut it so quickly that she left much good cheese with it, and threw that away also; the third peeled the rind off carefully, and cut neither too much nor too little. The shepherd told all this to his mother, who said, "Take the third for your wife." This he did, and lived contentedly and happily with her.

THE STORY OF SCHLAURAFFEN LAND

IN THE TIME of Schlauraffen I went there, and saw Rome and the Lateran hanging by a small silken thread, and a man without feet who outran a swift horse, and a keen sharp sword that cut through a

bridge. There I saw a young ass with a silver nose which pursued two fleet hares, and a lime tree that was very large, on which hot cakes were growing. There I saw a lean old goat which carried about a hundred cartloads of fat on his body, and sixty loads of salt. Have I not told enough lies? There I saw a plow plowing without horse or cow, and a child of one year threw four millstones from Ratisbon to Treves, and from Treves to Strasburg, and a hawk swam over the Rhine, which he had a perfect right to do. There I heard some fish begin to make such a disturbance with each other, that it resounded as far as heaven, and sweet honey flowed like water from a deep valley at the top of a high mountain, and these were strange things. There were two crows which were mowing a meadow, and I saw two gnats building a bridge, and two doves tore a wolf to pieces; two children brought forth two kids, and two frogs threshed corn together. There I saw two mice consecrating a bishop, and two cats scratching out a bear's tongue. Then a snail came running up and killed two furious lions. There stood a barber and shaved a woman's beard off; and two sucking-children bade their mother hold her tongue. There I saw two greyhounds which brought a mill out of the water; and a sorry old horse was beside it, and said it was right. And four horses were standing in the yard threshing corn with all their might, and two goats were heating the stove, and a red cow shot the bread into the oven. Then a cock crowed, Cock-a-doodle-doo! The story is all told—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

THE DITMARSCH TALE OF WONDERS

I WILL TELL you something. I saw two roasted fowls flying; they flew quickly and had their breasts turned to heaven and their backs to hell, and an anvil and a millstone swam across the Rhine prettily, slowly, and gently, and a frog sat on the ice at Whitsuntide and ate a plowshare. Three fellows who wanted to catch a hare, went on crutches and stilts; one of them was deaf, the second blind, the third dumb, and the fourth could not stir a step. Do you want to know how it was done? First, the blind man saw the hare running across the field, the dumb one called to the lame one, and the lame one seized it by the neck.

There were certain men who wished to sail on dry land, and they set their sails in the wind, and sailed away over great fields. Then they sailed over a high mountain, and there they were miserably drowned. A crab was chasing a hare which was running away at full speed, and

high up on the roof lay a cow which had climbed up there. In that country the flies are as big as the goats are here. Open the window, that the lies may fly out.

THE WISE SERVANT

HOW FORTUNATE is the master, and how well all goes in his house, when he has a wise servant who listens to his orders and does not obey them, but prefers following his own wisdom. A clever John of this kind was once sent out by his master to seek a lost cow. He stayed away a long time, and the master thought, "Faithful John does not spare any pains over his work!" As, however, he did not come back at all, the master was afraid lest some misfortune had befallen him, and set out himself to look for him. He had to search a long time, but at last he perceived the boy who was running up and down a large field. "Now, dear John," said the master when he had got up to him, "have you found the cow which I sent you to seek?" "No, master," he answered, "I have not found the cow, but then I have not looked for it." "Then what have you looked for, John?" "Something better, and that luckily I have found." "What is that, John?" "Three blackbirds," answered the boy. "And where are they?" asked the master. "I see one of them, I hear the other, and I am running after the third," answered the wise boy.

Take example by this, do not trouble yourselves about your masters or their orders, but rather do what comes into your head and pleases you, and then you will act just as wisely as prudent John.

LAZY HARRY

HARRY WAS lazy, and although he had nothing else to do but drive his goat daily to pasture, he nevertheless groaned when he went home after his day's work was done "It is indeed a heavy burden," said he, "and a wearisome employment to drive a goat into the field this way year after year, till late into the autumn! If one could but lie down and sleep, but no, one must have one's eyes open lest it hurts the young trees, or squeezes itself through the hedge into a garden, or runs away altogether. How can one have any rest, or peace of one's life?" He

seated himself, collected his thoughts, and considered how he could set his shoulders free from this burden. For a long time all thinking was to no purpose, but suddenly it was as if scales fell from his eyes. "I know what I will do," he cried, "I will marry fat Trina who has also a goat, and can take mine out with hers, and then I shall have no more need to trouble myself."

So Harry got up, set his weary legs in motion, and went right across the street, for it was no farther, to where the parents of fat Trina lived, and asked for their industrious and virtuous daughter in marriage. The parents did not reflect long. "Birds of a feather, flock together," they thought, and consented.

So fat Trina became Harry's wife, and led out both the goats. Harry had a good time of it, and had no work that he required to rest from but his own idleness. He only went out with her now and then, and said, "I merely do it that I may afterwards enjoy rest more, otherwise one loses all feeling for it."

But fat Trina was no less idle. "Dear Harry," said she one day, "why should we make our lives so toilsome when there is no need for it, and thus ruin the best days of our youth? Would it not be better for us to give the two goats which disturb us every morning in our sweetest sleep with their bleating, to our neighbor, and he will give us a beehive for them. We will put the beehive in a sunny place behind the house, and trouble ourselves no more about it. Bees do not require to be taken care of, or driven into the field; they fly out and find the way home again for themselves, and collect honey without giving the very least trouble." "You have spoken like a sensible woman," replied Harry. "We will carry out your proposal without delay, and besides all that, honey tastes better and nourishes one better than goat's milk, and it can be kept longer too."

The neighbor willingly gave a beehive for the two goats. The bees flew in and out from early morning till late evening without ever tiring, and filled the hive with the most beautiful honey, so that in autumn Harry was able to take a whole pitcherful out of it.

They placed the jug on a board which was fixed to the wall of their bedroom, and as they were afraid that it might be stolen from them, or that the mice might find it, Trina brought in a stout hazel stick and put it beside her bed, so that without unnecessary getting up she might reach it with her hand, and drive away the uninvited guests.

Lazy Harry did not like to leave his bed before noon. "He who rises early," said he, "wastes his substance."

One morning when he was still lying among the feathers in broad daylight, resting after his long sleep, he said to his wife, "Women are fond of sweet things, and you are always tasting the honey in private; it will

be better for us to exchange it for a goose with a young gosling, before you eat up the whole of it." "But," answered Trina, "not before we have a child to take care of them! Am I to worry myself with the little geese, and spend all my strength on them to no purpose?" "Do you think," said Harry, "that the youngster will look after geese? Nowadays children no longer obey, they do according to their own fancy, because they consider themselves cleverer than their parents, just like that lad who was sent to seek the cow and chased three blackbirds." "Oh," replied Trina, "this one shall fare badly if he does not do what I say! I will take a stick and belabor his skin for him with more blows than I can count. Look, Harry," cried she in her zeal, and seized the stick which she had to drive the mice away with, "Look, this is the way I will fall on him!" She reached her arm out to strike, but unhappily hit the honey pitcher above the bed. The pitcher struck against the wall and fell down in fragments, and the fine honey streamed down on the ground. "There lie the goose and the young gosling," said Harry, "and want no looking after. But it is lucky that the pitcher did not fall on my head. We have all reason to be satisfied with our lot." And then as he saw that there was still some honey in one of the fragments he stretched out his hand for it, and said quite gaily, "The remains, my wife, we will still eat with a relish, and we will rest a little after the fright we have had. What matters if we do get up a little later—the day is always long enough." "Yes," answered Trina, "we shall always get to the end of it at the proper time. Do you know that the snail was once asked to a wedding and set out to go, but arrived at the christening. In front of the house it fell over the fence, and said, 'Speed does no good.'"

THE PEASANT IN HEAVEN

ONCE ON A TIME a poor pious peasant died, and arrived before the gate of heaven. At the same time a very rich, rich lord came there who also wanted to get into heaven. Then Saint Peter came with the key, and opened the door, and let the great man in, but apparently did not see the peasant, and shut the door again. And now the peasant outside heard how the great man was received in heaven with all kinds of rejoicing, and how they were making music, and singing within. At length all became quiet again, and Saint Peter came and opened the gate of heaven, and let the peasant in. The peasant, however, expected that they would make music and sing when he went in also, but all re-

mained quite quiet; he was received with great affection, it is true, and the angels came to meet him, but no one sang. Then the peasant asked Saint Peter how it was that they did not sing for him as they had done when the rich man went in, and said that it seemed to him that there in heaven things were done with just as much partiality as on earth. Then said Saint Peter, "By no means, you are just as dear to us as anyone else, and will enjoy every heavenly delight that the rich man enjoys, but poor fellows like you come to heaven every day, but a rich man like this does not come more than once in a hundred years!"

THE DURATION OF LIFE

WHEN God had created the world and was about to fix the length of each creature's life, the ass came and asked, "Lord, how long shall I live?" "Thirty years," replied God; "does that content you?" "Ah, Lord," answered the ass, "that is a long time. Think of my painful existence! To carry heavy burdens from morning to night, to drag sacks of corn to the mill, that others may eat bread, to be cheered and refreshed with nothing but blows and kicks. Relieve me of a portion of this long time." Then God had pity on him and relieved him of eighteen years. The ass went away comforted, and the dog appeared. "How long would you like to live?" said God to him. "Thirty years are too many for the ass, but you will be satisfied with that." "Lord," answered the dog, "is that your will? Consider how I shall have to run, my feet will never hold out so long, and when I have once lost my voice for barking, and my teeth for biting, what will be left for me to do but run from one corner to another and growl?" God saw that he was right, and released him from twelve years of life. Then came the monkey. "You will certainly live thirty years willingly?" said the Lord to him. "You have no need to work as the ass and the dog have to do, and will always enjoy yourself." "Ah! Lord," he answered, "it may seem as if that were the case, but it is quite different. When it rains porridge I have no spoon. I am always to play merry pranks, and make faces which force people to laugh, and if they give me an apple, and I bite into it, why it is sour! How often sadness hides itself behind mirth! I shall never be able to hold out for thirty years." God was gracious and took off ten.

At last man appeared, joyous, healthy and vigorous, and begged God to appoint his time for him. "Thirty years shall you live," said the Lord. "Is that enough for you?" "What a short time," cried the man, "when I have built my house and my fire burns on my own hearth;

when I have planted trees which blossom and bear fruit, and am just intending to enjoy my life, I am to die! O Lord, lengthen my time." "I will add to it the ass' eighteen years," said God. "That is not enough," replied the man. "You shall also have the dog's twelve years." "Still too little!" "Well, then," said God, "I will give you the monkey's ten years also, but more you shall not have." The man went away, but was not satisfied.

So man lives seventy years. The first thirty are his human years, which are soon gone; then is he healthy, merry, works with pleasure, and is glad of his life. Then follow the ass' eighteen years, when one burden after another is laid on him, he has to carry the corn which feeds others, and blows and kicks are the reward of his faithful services. Then come the dog's twelve years, when he lies in the corner, and growls and has no longer any teeth to bite with, and when this time is over the monkey's ten years form the end. Then man is weak-headed and foolish, does silly things, and becomes the jest of the children.

DEATH'S MESSENGERS

IN ANCIENT TIMES a giant was once traveling on a great highway, when suddenly an unknown man sprang up before him, and said, "Halt, not one step farther!" "What!" cried the giant, "a creature whom I can crush between my fingers, wants to block my way? Who are you that you dare to speak so boldly?" "I am Death," answered the other. "No one resists me, and you also must obey my commands." But the giant refused, and began to struggle with Death. It was a long, violent battle, at last the giant got the upper hand, and struck Death down with his fist, so that he dropped by a stone. The giant went his way, and Death lay there conquered, and so weak that he could not get up again. "What will be done now," said he, "if I stay lying here in a corner? No one will die now in the world, and it will get so full of people that they won't have room to stand beside each other." In the meantime a young man came along the road, who was strong and healthy, singing a song, and glancing around on every side. When he saw the half-fainting one, he went compassionately to him, raised him up, poured a strengthening draught out of his flask for him, and waited till he came round. "Do you know," said the stranger, while he was getting up, "who I am, and who it is whom you have helped on his legs again?" "No," answered the youth, "I do not know you." "I am Death," said he. "I spare no one, and can make no exception with you—but that

you may see that I am grateful, I promise you that I will not fall on you unexpectedly, but will send my messengers to you before I come and take you away." "Well," said the youth, "it is something gained that I shall know when you come, and at any rate be safe from you for so long." Then he went on his way, and was lighthearted, and enjoyed himself, and lived without thought. But youth and health did not last long, soon came sicknesses and sorrows, which tormented him by day, and took away his rest by night. "Die, I shall not," said he to himself, "for Death will send his messengers before that, but I do wish these wretched days of sickness were over." As soon as he felt himself well again he began once more to live merrily. Then one day some one tapped him on the shoulder. He looked round, and Death stood behind him, and said, "Follow me, the hour of your departure from this world has come." "What," replied the man, "will you break your word? Did you not promise me that you would send your messengers to me before coming yourself? I have seen none!" "Silence!" answered Death. "Have I not sent one messenger to you after another? Did not fever come and smite you, and shake you, and cast you down? Has dizziness not bewildered your head? Has not gout twitched you in all your limbs? Did not your ears sing? Did not toothache bite into your cheeks? Was it not dark before your eyes? And besides all that, has not my own brother Sleep reminded you every night of me? Did you not lie by night as if you were already dead?" The man could make no answer; he yielded to his fate, and went away with Death.

MASTER PFRIEM*

MASTER PFRIEM was a short, thin, but lively man, who never rested a moment. His face, of which his turned-up nose was the only prominent feature, was marked with smallpox and pale as death, his hair was gray and shaggy, his eyes small, but they glanced perpetually about on all sides. He saw everything, criticized everything, knew everything best, and was always in the right. When he went into the streets, he moved his arms about as if he were rowing; and once he struck the pail of a girl, who was carrying water, so high in the air that he himself was wetted all over by it. "Stupid thing," cried he to her, while he was shaking himself, "could you not see that I was coming behind you?" By trade he was a shoemaker, and when he worked he pulled his thread out with such force that he drove his fist into every-

* Pfriem, a cobbler's awl.

one who did not keep far enough off. No apprentice stayed more than a month with him, for he had always some fault to find with the very best work. At one time it was that the stitches were not even, at another that one shoe was too long, or one heel higher than the other, or the leather not cut large enough. "Wait," said he to his apprentice, "I will soon show you how we make skins soft," and he brought a strap and gave him a couple of strokes across the back. He called them all sluggards. He himself did not turn much work out of his hands, for he never sat still for a quarter of an hour. If his wife got up very early in the morning and lighted the fire, he jumped out of bed, and ran barefoot into the kitchen, crying, "Will you burn my house down for me? That is fire one could roast an ox by! Does wood cost nothing?" If the servants were standing by their wash tubs and laughing, and telling each other all they knew, he scolded them, and said, "There stand the geese cackling, and forgetting their work, to gossip! And why fresh soap? Disgraceful extravagance and shameful idleness into the bargain! They want to save their hands, and not rub the things properly!" And out he would run and knock a pail full of soap and water over, so that the whole kitchen was flooded. Someone was building a new house, so he hurried to the window to look on. "There, they are using that red sandstone again that never dries!" cried he. "No one will ever be healthy in that house! and just look how badly the fellows are laying the stones! Besides, the mortar is good for nothing! It ought to have gravel in it, not sand. I shall live to see that house tumble down on the people who are in it." He sat down, put a couple of stitches in, and then jumped up again, unfastened his leather apron, and cried, "I will just go out, and appeal to those men's consciences." He stumbled on the carpenters. "What's this?" cried he, "you are not working by the line! Do you expect the beams to be straight?—one wrong will put all wrong." He snatched an ax out of a carpenter's hand and wanted to show him how he ought to cut; but as a cart loaded with clay came by, he threw the ax away, and hastened to the peasant who was walking by the side of it: "You are not in your right mind," said he: "who yokes young horses to a heavily laden cart? The poor beasts will die on the spot." The peasant did not give him an answer, and Pfriem in a rage ran back into his workshop. When he was setting himself to work again, the apprentice reached him a shoe. "Well, what's that again?" screamed he. "Haven't I told you you ought not to cut shoes so broad? Who would buy a shoe like this, which is hardly anything else but a sole? I insist on my orders being followed exactly." "Master," answered the apprentice, "you may easily be quite right about the shoe being a bad one, but it is the one which you yourself cut out, and yourself set to work at. When you jumped up a while since, you knocked it off the

table, and I have only just picked it up. An angel from heaven, however, would never make you believe that."

One night Master Pfriem dreamed he was dead, and on his way to heaven. When he got there, he knocked loudly at the door. "I wonder," said he to himself, "that they have no knocker on the door—one knocks one's knuckles sore." The apostle Peter opened the door, and wanted to see who demanded admission so noisily. "Ah, it's you, Master Pfriem" said he, "well, I'll let you in, but I warn you that you must give up that habit of yours, and find fault with nothing you see in heaven, or you may fare ill." "You might have spared your warning," answered Pfriem. "I know already what is seemly, and here, God be thanked, everything is perfect, and there is nothing to blame as there is on earth." So he went in, and walked up and down the wide expanses of heaven. He looked around him, to the left and to the right, but sometimes shook his head, or muttered something to himself. Then he saw two angels who were carrying away a beam. It was the beam which someone had had in his own eye whilst he was looking for the splinter in the eye of another. They did not, however, carry the beam lengthways, but obliquely. "Did anyone ever see such a piece of stupidity?" thought Master Pfriem; but he said nothing, and seemed satisfied with it. "It comes to the same thing after all, whichever way they carry the beam, straight or crooked, if they only get along with it, and truly I do not see them knock against anything." Soon after this he saw two angels who were drawing water out of a well into a bucket, but at the same time he observed that the bucket was full of holes, and that the water was running out of it on every side. They were watering the earth with rain. "Hang it," he exclaimed; but happily recollected himself, and thought, "Perhaps it is only a pastime. If it is an amusement, then it seems they can do useless things of this kind even here in heaven, where people, as I have already noticed, do nothing but idle about." He went farther and saw a cart which had stuck fast in a deep hole. "It's no wonder," said he to the man who stood by it; "who would load so unreasonably? what have you there?" "Good wishes," replied the man. "I could not go along the right way with it, but still I have pushed it safely up here, and they won't leave me sticking here." In fact an angel did come and harnessed two horses to it. "That's quite right," thought Pfriem, "but two horses won't get that cart out, it must at least have four to it." Another angel came and brought two more horses; she did not, however, harness them in front of it, but behind. That was too much for Master Pfriem. "Clumsy creature," he burst out with, "what are you doing there? Has any one ever since the world began seen a cart drawn in that way? But you, in your conceited arrogance, think that you know everything best." He was going to say

more, but one of the inhabitants of heaven seized him by the throat and pushed him forth with irresistible strength. Beneath the gateway Master Pfriem turned his head round to take one more look at the cart, and saw that it was being raised into the air by four winged horses.

At this moment Master Pfriem awoke. "Things are certainly arranged in heaven otherwise than they are on earth," said he to himself, "and that excuses much; but who can see horses harnessed both behind and before with patience; to be sure they had wings, but who could know that? It is, besides, great folly to fix a pair of wings to a horse that has four legs to run with already! But I must get up, or else they will make nothing but mistakes for me in my house. It is a lucky thing for me though, that I am not really dead."

EVE'S VARIOUS CHILDREN

WHEN Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise, they were compelled to build a house for themselves on unfruitful ground, and eat their bread in the sweat of their brow. Adam dug up the land, and Eve spun. Every year Eve brought a child into the world; but the children were unlike each other, some pretty, and some ugly. After a considerable time had gone by, God sent an angel to them, to announce that he was coming to inspect their household. Eve, delighted that the Lord should be so gracious, cleaned her house diligently, decked it with flowers, and strewed reeds on the floor. Then she brought in her children, but only the beautiful ones. She washed and bathed them, combed their hair, put clean raiment on them, and cautioned them to conduct themselves decorously and modestly in the presence of the Lord. They were to bow down before him civilly, hold out their hands, and to answer his questions modestly and sensibly. The ugly children were, however, not to let themselves be seen. One hid himself beneath the hay, another under the roof, a third in the straw, the fourth in the stove, the fifth in the cellar, the sixth under a tub, the seventh beneath the wine cask, the eighth under an old fur cloak, the ninth and tenth beneath the cloth out of which she always made their clothes, and the eleventh and twelfth under the leather out of which she cut their shoes. She had scarcely got ready, before there was a knock at the house door. Adam looked through a chink, and saw that it was the Lord. Adam opened the door respectfully, and the Heavenly Father entered. There, in a row, stood the pretty children, and bowed before him, held out their hands, and knelt down. The Lord, however, began

to bless them, laid his hands on the first, and said, "You shall be a powerful king"; and to the second, "You a prince," to the third, "You a count," to the fourth, "You a knight," to the fifth, "You a nobleman," to the sixth, "You a burgher," to the seventh, "You a merchant," to the eighth, "You a learned man." He bestowed upon them also all his richest blessings. When Eve saw that the Lord was so mild and gracious, she thought, "I will bring hither my ill-favored children also, it may be that he will bestow his blessing on them likewise." So she ran and brought them out of the hay, the straw, the stove, and wherever else she had concealed them. Then came the whole coarse, dirty, shabby, sooty band. The Lord smiled, looked at them all, and said, "I will bless these also." He laid his hands on the first, and said to him, "You shall be a peasant," to the second, "You a fisherman," to the third, "You a smith," to the fourth, "You a tanner," to the fifth, "You a weaver," to the sixth, "You a shoemaker," to the seventh, "You a tailor," to the eighth, "You a potter," to the ninth, "You a wagoner," to the tenth, "You a sailor," to the eleventh, "You an errand boy," to the twelfth, "You a scullion all the days of your life."

When Eve had heard all this she said, "Lord, how unequally you divide your gifts! After all they are all of them my children, whom I have brought into the world, your favors should be given to all alike." But God answered, "Eve, you do not understand. It is right and necessary that the entire world should be supplied from your children; if they were all princes and lords, who would grow corn, thresh it, grind and bake it? Who would be blacksmiths, weavers, carpenters, masons, laborers, tailors and seamstresses? Each shall have his own place, so that one shall support the other, and all shall be fed like the limbs of one body." Then Eve answered, "Ah, Lord, forgive me, I was too quick in speaking to you. Have your divine will with my children."

THE NAIL

A MERCHANT had done good business at the fair; he had sold his wares, and lined his money bags with gold and silver. Then he wanted to travel homeward, and be in his own house before nightfall. So he packed his trunk with the money on his horse, and rode away.

At noon he rested in a town, and when he wanted to go farther the stable boy brought out his horse and said, "A nail is wanting, sir, in the shoe of its left hind foot." "Let it be wanting," answered the mer-

chant; "the shoe will certainly stay on for the six miles I have still to go. I am in a hurry."

In the afternoon, when he once more alighted and had his horse fed, the stable boy went into the room to him and said, "Sir, a shoe is missing from your horse's left hind foot. Shall I take him to the blacksmith?" "Let it still be wanting," answered the man; "the horse can very well hold out for the couple of miles which remain. I am in haste."

He rode forth, but before long the horse began to limp. It had not limped long before it began to stumble, and it had not stumbled long before it fell down and broke its leg. The merchant was forced to leave the horse where it was, and unbuckle the trunk, take it on his back, and go home on foot. And there he did not arrive until quite late at night. "And that unlucky nail," said he to himself, "has caused all this disaster."

Hasten slowly.

THE POOR BOY IN THE GRAVE

THERE WAS once a poor shepherd boy whose father and mother were dead, and he was placed by the authorities in the house of a rich man, who was to feed him and bring him up. The man and his wife had, however, bad hearts, and were greedy and anxious about their riches, and vexed whenever anyone put a morsel of their bread in his mouth. The poor young fellow might do what he liked, he got little to eat, but only so many blows the more.

One day he had to watch a hen and her chickens, but she ran through a hedge with them, and a hawk darted down instantly, and carried her off through the air. The boy called, "Thief! thief! rascal!" with all the strength of his body. But what good did that do? The hawk did not bring its prey back again. The man heard the noise, and ran to the spot, and as soon as he saw that his hen was gone, he fell in a rage, and gave the boy such a beating that he could not stir for two days. Then he had to take care of the chickens without the hen, but now his difficulty was greater, for one ran here and the other there. He thought he was doing a very wise thing when he tied them all together with a string, because then the hawk would not be able to steal any of them away from him. But he was very much mistaken. After two days, worn out with running about and hunger, he fell asleep; the bird of prey came, and seized one of the chickens, and as the others were tied fast to it, it carried them

all off together, perched itself on a tree, and devoured them. The farmer was just coming home, and when he saw the misfortune, he got angry and beat the boy so unmercifully that he was forced to lie in bed for several days.

When he was on his legs again, the farmer said to him, "You are too stupid for me, I cannot make a herdsman of you, you must go as errand boy." Then he sent him to the judge, to whom he was to carry a basketful of grapes, and he gave him a letter as well. On the way hunger and thirst tormented the unhappy boy so violently that he ate two of the bunches of grapes. He took the basket to the judge, but when the judge had read the letter, and counted the bunches he said, "Two clusters are wanting." The boy confessed quite honestly that, driven by hunger and thirst, he had devoured the two which were wanting. The judge wrote a letter to the farmer, and asked for the same number of grapes again. These also the boy had to take to him with a letter. As he again was so extremely hungry and thirsty, he could not help it, and again ate two bunches. But first he took the letter out of the basket, put it under a stone and seated himself thereon in order that the letter might not see and betray him. The judge, however, again made him give an explanation about the missing bunches. "Ah," said the boy, "how have you learned that? The letter could not know about it, for I put it under a stone before I did it." The judge could not help laughing at the boy's simplicity, and sent the man a letter wherein he cautioned him to keep the poor boy better, and not let him want for meat and drink, and also that he was to teach him what was right and what was wrong.

"I will soon show you the difference," said the hard man, "if you will eat, you must work, and if you do anything wrong, you shall be quite sufficiently taught by blows."

The next day he set him a hard task. He was to chop two bundles of straw for food for the horses, and then the man threatened: "In five hours," said he, "I shall be back again, and if the straw is not cut to chaff by that time, I will beat you until you cannot move a limb." The farmer went with his wife, the manservant and the girl, to the yearly fair, and left nothing behind for the boy but a small bit of bread. The boy seated himself on the bench, and began to work with all his might. As he got warm over it he put his little coat off and threw it on the straw. In his terror lest he should not get done in time he kept constantly cutting, and in his haste, without noticing it, he chopped his little coat as well as the straw. He became aware of the misfortune too late; there was no repairing it. "Ah," cried he, "now all is over with me! The wicked man did not threaten me for nothing; if he comes back and sees what I have done, he will kill me. Rather than that I will take my own life."

The boy had once heard the farmer's wife say, "I have a pot with poison in it under my bed." She, however, had only said that to keep away greedy people, for there was honey in it. The boy crept under the bed, brought out the pot, and ate all that was in it. "I do not know," said he, "folks say death is bitter, but it tastes very sweet to me. It is no wonder that the farmer's wife has so often longed for death." He seated himself in a little chair, and was prepared to die. But instead of becoming weaker he felt himself strengthened by the nourishing food. "It cannot have been poison," thought he, "but the farmer once said there was a small bottle of poison for flies in the box in which he keeps his clothes; that, no doubt, will be the true poison, and bring death to me." It was, however, no poison for flies, but Hungarian wine. The boy got out the bottle, and emptied it. "This death tastes sweet too," said he, but shortly after when the wine began to mount into his brain and stupefy him, he thought his end was drawing near. "I feel that I must die," said he, "I will go away to the churchyard, and seek a grave." He staggered out, reached the churchyard, and laid himself in a newly dug grave. He lost his senses more and more. In the neighborhood was an inn where a wedding was being held; when he heard the music, he fancied he was already in Paradise, until at length he lost all consciousness. The poor boy never awoke again, the heat of the strong wine and the cold night dew deprived him of life, and he remained in the grave in which he had laid himself.

When the farmer heard the news of the boy's death he was terrified, and afraid of being brought to justice—indeed, his distress took such a powerful hold of him that he fell fainting to the ground. His wife, who was standing on the hearth with a pan of hot fat, ran to him to help him. But the flames darted against the pan, the whole house caught fire, in a few hours it lay in ashes, and the rest of the years they had to live they passed in poverty and misery, tormented by the pangs of conscience.

THE PEASANT AND THE DEVIL

THERE WAS once on a time a farsighted, crafty peasant whose tricks were much talked about. The best story is, however, how he once got hold of the Devil, and made a fool of him. The peasant had one day been working in his field, and as twilight had set in, was making ready for the journey home, when he saw a heap of burning coals in the middle of his field, and when, full of astonishment, he went up to it, a little

black devil was sitting on the live coals. "You do indeed sit upon a treasure!" said the peasant. "Yes, in truth," replied the Devil, "on a treasure which contains more gold and silver than you have ever seen in your life!" "The treasure lies in my field and belongs to me," said the peasant. "It is yours," answered the Devil, "if you will for two years give me the half of everything your field produces. Money I have enough of, but I have a desire for the fruits of the earth." The peasant agreed to the bargain. "In order, however, that no dispute may arise about the division," said he, "everything that is above ground shall belong to you, and what is under the earth to me." The Devil was quite satisfied with that, but the cunning peasant had sown turnips.

Now when the time for harvest came, the Devil appeared and wanted to take away his crop; but he found nothing but the yellow withered leaves, while the peasant, full of delight, was digging up his turnips. "You have had the best of it for once," said the Devil, "but the next time that won't do. What grows above ground shall be yours, and what is under it mine." "I am willing," replied the peasant; but when the time came to sow, he did not again sow turnips, but wheat. The grain became ripe, and the peasant went into the field and cut the full stalks down to the ground. When the Devil came, he found nothing but the stubble, and went away in a fury down into a cleft in the rocks. "That is the way to cheat the Devil," said the peasant, and went and fetched away the treasure.

THE MASTER THIEF

ONE DAY an old man and his wife were sitting in front of a miserable house resting awhile from their work. Suddenly a splendid carriage with four black horses came driving up, and a richly dressed man descended from it. The peasant stood up, went to the great man, and asked what he wanted, and in what way he could be useful to him? The stranger stretched out his hand to the old man, and said, "I want nothing but to enjoy for once a country dish; cook me some potatoes, in the way you always have them, and then I will sit down at your table and eat them with pleasure." The peasant smiled and said, "You are a count or a prince, or perhaps even a duke; noble gentlemen often have such fancies, but you shall have your wish." The wife went into the kitchen, and began to wash and rub the potatoes, and to make them into balls, as they are eaten by the country folk. While she was busy with this work, the peasant said to the stranger, "Come into my garden with me for a while,

I have still something to do there." He had dug some holes in the garden, and now wanted to plant some trees in them. "Have you no children," asked the stranger, "who could help you with your work?" "No," answered the peasant, "I had a son, it is true, but it is long since he went out into the world. He was a ne'er-do-well; sharp, and knowing, but he would learn nothing and was full of bad tricks, at last he ran away from me; and since then I have heard nothing of him."

The old man took a young tree, put it in a hole, drove in a post beside it, and when he had shoveled in some earth and had trampled it firmly down, he tied the stem of the tree above, below, and in the middle, fast to the post by a rope of straw. "But tell me," said the stranger, "why you don't tie that crooked knotted tree, which is lying in the corner there, bent down almost to the ground, to a post also that it may grow straight, as well as these?" The old man smiled and said, "Sir, you speak according to your knowledge, it is easy to see that you are not familiar with gardening. That tree there is old, and misshapen, no one can make it straight now. Trees must be trained while they are young." "That is how it was with your son," said the stranger, "if you had trained him while he was still young, he would not have run away; now he too must have grown hard and misshapen." "Truly it is a long time since he went away," replied the old man, "he must have changed." "Would you know him again if he were to come to you?" asked the stranger. "Hardly by his face," replied the peasant, "but he has a mark about him, a birthmark on his shoulder, that looks like a bean." When he had said that the stranger pulled off his coat, bared his shoulder, and showed the peasant the bean.

"Good God!" cried the old man, "you are really my son!" and love for his child stirred in his heart. "But," he added, "how can you be my son, you have become a great lord and live in wealth and luxury? How have you contrived to do that?" "Ah, father," answered the son. "the young tree was bound to no post and has grown crooked, now it is too old, it will never be straight again. How have I got all that? I have become a thief, but do not be alarmed, I am a master thief. For me there are neither locks nor bolts. whatever I desire is mine. Do not imagine that I steal like a common thief, I only take some of the superfluity of the rich. Poor people are safe, I would rather give to them than take anything from them. It is the same with anything which I can have without trouble, cunning and dexterity—I never touch it." "Alas, my son," said the father, "it still does not please me. a thief is still a thief, I tell you it will end badly." He took him to his mother, and when she heard that was her son, she wept for joy, but when he told her that he had become a master thief, two streams flowed down over her face. At length she said, "Even if he has become a thief, he is still my son, and

my eyes have beheld him once more." They sat down to table, and once again he ate with his parents the wretched food which he had not eaten for so long. The father said, "If our Lord, the count up there in the castle, learns who you are, and what trade you follow, he will not take you in his arms and cradle you in them as he did when he held you at the font, but will cause you to swing from a halter." "Be easy, father, he will do me no harm, for I understand my trade. I will go to him myself this very day." When evening drew near, the master thief seated himself in his carriage, and drove to the castle. The count received him civilly, for he took him for a distinguished man. When, however, the stranger made himself known, the count turned pale and was quite silent for some time. At length he said, "You are my godson, and on that account mercy shall take the place of justice, and I will deal leniently with you. Since you pride yourself on being a master thief, I will put your art to the proof, but if you do not stand the test, you must marry the rope-maker's daughter, and the croaking of the raven must be your music on the occasion." "Lord count," answered the master thief, "think of three things, as difficult as you like, and if I do not perform your tasks, do with me what you will." The count reflected for some minutes, and then said, "Well, then, in the first place, you shall steal the horse I keep for my own riding, out of the stable; in the next, you shall steal the sheet from beneath the bodies of my wife and myself when we are asleep, without our observing it, and the wedding ring of my wife as well; thirdly and lastly, you shall steal away out of the church, the parson and clerk. Mark what I am saying, for your life depends on it."

The master thief went to the nearest town; there he bought the clothes of an old peasant woman, and put them on. Then he stained his face brown, and painted wrinkles on it as well, so that no one could have recognized him. Then he filled a small cask with old Hungary wine in which was mixed a powerful sleeping drink. He put the cask in a basket, which he took on his back, and walked with slow and tottering steps to the count's castle. It was already dark when he arrived. He sat down on a stone in the courtyard and began to cough, like an asthmatic old woman, and to rub his hands as if he were cold. In front of the door of the stable some soldiers were lying round a fire; one of them observed the woman, and called out to her, "Come nearer, old mother, and warm yourself beside us. After all, you have no bed for the night, and must take one where you can find it." The old woman tottered up to them, begged them to lift the basket from her back, and sat down beside them at the fire. "What have you got in your little cask, old lady?" asked one. "A good mouthful of wine," she answered. "I live by trade, for money and fair words I am quite ready to let you have a glass." "Let us have it here, then," said the soldier, and when he had tasted one glass he said,

"When wine is good, I like another glass," and had another poured out for himself, and the rest followed his example. "Hollo, comrades," cried one of them to those who were in the stable, "here is an old woman who has wine that is as old as herself; take a draught, it will warm your stomachs far better than our fire." The old woman carried her cask into the stable. One of the soldiers had seated himself on the saddled riding horse, another held its bridle in his hand, a third had laid hold of its tail. She poured out as much as they wanted until the spring ran dry. It was not long before the bridle fell from the hand of the one, and he fell down and began to snore, the other left hold of the tail, lay down and snored still louder. The one who was sitting in the saddle, did remain sitting, but bent his head almost down to the horse's neck, and slept and blew with his mouth like the bellows of a forge. The soldiers outside had already been asleep for a long time, and were lying on the ground motionless, as if dead. When the master thief saw that he had succeeded, he gave the first a rope in his hand instead of the bridle, and the other who had been holding the tail, a wisp of straw, but what was he to do with the one who was sitting on the horse's back? He did not want to throw him down, for he might have awakened and have uttered a cry. He had a good idea, he unbuckled the girths of the saddle, tied a couple of ropes which were hanging to a ring on the wall fast to the saddle, and drew the sleeping rider up into the air on it, then he twisted the rope round the posts, and made it fast. He soon unloosed the horse from the chain, but if he had ridden over the stony pavement of the yard they would have heard the noise in the castle. So he wrapped the horse's hoofs in old rags, led him carefully out, leapt upon him, and galloped off.

When day broke, the master galloped to the castle on the stolen horse. The count had just got up, and was looking out of the window. "Good morning, Sir Count," he cried to him. "here is the horse, which I have got safely out of the stable! Just look, how beautifully your soldiers are lying there sleeping; and if you will but go into the stable, you will see how comfortable your watchers have made it for themselves." The count could not help laughing, then he said, "For once you have succeeded, but things won't go so well the second time, and I warn you that if you come before me as a thief, I will handle you as I would a thief." When the countess went to bed that night, she closed her hand with the wedding ring tightly together, and the count said, "All the doors are locked and bolted, I will keep awake and wait for the thief, but if he gets in by the window, I will shoot him." The master thief, however, went in the dark to the gallows, cut a poor sinner who was hanging there down from the halter, and carried him on his back to the castle. Then he set a ladder up to the bedroom, put the dead body on his shoulders, and began to

climb up. When he had got so high that the head of the dead man showed at the window, the count, who was watching in his bed, fired a pistol at him, and immediately the master let the poor sinner fall down, and hid himself in one corner. The night was sufficiently lighted by the moon, for the master to see distinctly how the count got out of the window on to the ladder, came down, carried the dead body into the garden, and began to dig a hole in which to lay it. "Now," thought the thief, "the favorable moment has come," stole nimbly out of his corner, and climbed up the ladder, straight into the countess's bedroom. "Dear wife," he began in the count's voice, "the thief is dead, but after all, he is my godson, and has been more of a scapegrace than a villain. I will not put him to open shame; besides, I am sorry for the parents. I will bury him myself before daybreak, in the garden that the thing may not be known, so give me the sheet, I will wrap up the body in it, and bury him as a dog buries things by scratching." The countess gave him the sheet. "I tell you what," continued the thief, "I have a fit of magnanimity on me, give me the ring too—the unhappy man risked his life for it, so he may take it with him into his grave." She would not gainsay the count, and although she did it unwillingly she drew the ring from her finger, and gave it to him. The thief made off with both these things, and reached home safely before the count in the garden had finished his work of burying.

What a long face the count did pull when the master came next morning, and brought him the sheet and the ring. "Are you a wizard?" said he. "Who has fetched you out of the grave in which I myself laid you, and brought you to life again?" "You did not bury me," said the thief, "but the poor sinner on the gallows," and he told him exactly how everything had happened, and the count was forced to own to him that he was a clever, crafty thief. "But you have not reached the end yet," he added, "you have still to perform the third task, and if you do not succeed in that, all is of no use." The master smiled and returned no answer. When night had fallen he went with a long sack on his back, a bundle under his arms, and a lantern in his hand to the village church. In the sack he had some crabs, and in the bundle short wax candles. He sat down in the churchyard, took out a crab, and stuck a wax candle on his back. Then he lighted the little light, put the crab on the ground, and let it creep about. He took a second out of the sack, and treated it in the same way, and so on until the last was out of the sack. Hereupon he put on a long black garment that looked like a monk's cowl, and stuck a gray beard on his chin. When at last he was quite unrecognizable, he took the sack in which the crabs had been, went into the church, and ascended the pulpit. The clock in the tower was just striking twelve; when the last stroke had sounded, he cried with a loud and

piercing voice, "Hearken, sinful men, the end of all things has come! The last day is at hand! Hearken! Hearken! Whoever wishes to go to heaven with me must creep into the sack. I am Peter, who opens and shuts the gate of heaven. Behold how the dead outside there in the churchyard are wandering about collecting their bones. Come, come, and creep into the sack; the world is about to be destroyed!" The cry echoed through the whole village. The parson and clerk who lived nearest to the church, heard it first, and when they saw the lights which were moving about the churchyard, they observed that something unusual was going on, and went into the church. They listened to the sermon for a while, and then the clerk nudged the parson and said, "It would not be amiss if we were to use the opportunity together, and before the dawning of the last day, find an easy way of getting to heaven." "To tell the truth," answered the parson, "that is what I myself have been thinking, so if you are inclined, we will set out on our way." "Yes," answered the clerk, "but you, the pastor, have the precedence. I will follow." So the parson went first, and ascended the pulpit where the master opened his sack. The parson crept in first, and then the clerk. The master immediately tied up the sack tightly, seized it by the middle, and dragged it down the pulpit steps, and whenever the heads of the two fools bumped against the steps, he cried, "We are going over the mountains." Then he drew them through the village in the same way, and when they were passing through puddles, he cried, "Now we are going through wet clouds," and when at last he was dragging them up the steps of the castle, he cried, "Now we are on the steps of heaven, and will soon be in the outer court." When he had got to the top, he pushed the sack into the pigeon house, and when the pigeons fluttered about, he said, "Hark how glad the angels are. and how they are flapping their wings!" Then he bolted the door upon them, and went away.

Next morning he went to the count, and told him that he had performed the third task also, and had carried the parson and clerk out of the church. "Where have you left them?" asked the lord. "They are lying upstairs in a sack in the pigeon house, and imagine that they are in heaven." The count went up himself, and convinced himself that the master had told the truth. When he had delivered the parson and clerk from their captivity, he said, "You are an arch-thief, and have won your wager. For once you escape with a whole skin, but see that you leave my land, for if ever you set foot on it again, you may count on your elevation to the gallows." The arch-thief took leave of his parents, once more went forth into the wide world, and no one has ever heard of him since.

TALES OF ANDERSEN

THE PRINCESS ON THE PEA

THERE WAS once a Prince who wanted to marry a Princess; but she was to be a *real* princess. So he traveled about, all through the world, to find a real one, but everywhere there was something in the way. There were princesses enough, but whether they were *real* princesses he could not quite make out: there was always something that did not seem quite right. So he came home again, and was quite sad: for he wished so much to have a real princess. .

One evening a terrible storm came on. It lightened and thundered, the rain streamed down; it was quite fearful! Then there was a knocking at the town gate, and the old King went out to open it.

It was a Princess who stood outside the gate. But, mercy! how she looked, from the rain and the rough weather! The water ran down from her hair and her clothes; it ran in at the points of her shoes, and out at the heels; and yet she declared that she was a real princess.

"Yes, we will soon find that out," thought the old Queen. But she said nothing, only went into the bedchamber, took all the bedding off, and put a pea on the flooring of the bedstead; then she took twenty mattresses and laid them upon the pea, and then twenty eider-down beds upon the mattresses. On this the Princess had to lie all night. In the morning she was asked how she slept.

"O, miserably!" said the Princess. "I scarcely closed my eyes all night long. Goodness knows what was in my bed. I lay upon something hard, so that I am black and blue all over. It is quite dreadful!"

Now they saw that she was a real princess, for through the twenty mattresses and the twenty eider-down beds she had felt the pea. No one but a real princess could be so delicate.

So the Prince took her for his wife, for now he knew that he had a true princess; and the pea was put in the museum, and it is there now, unless somebody has carried it off.

Look you, this is a true story.

THE OLD STREET LAMP

DID YOU ever hear the story of the old Street Lamp? It is not very remarkable, but it may be listened to once in a while.

It was a very honest old Lamp, that had done its work for many,

many years, but which was now to be pensioned off. It hung for the last time to its post, and gave light to the street. It felt as an old dancer at the theatre, who is dancing for the last time, and who tomorrow will sit forgotten in her garret. The Lamp was in great fear about the morrow, for it knew that it was to appear in the council house, and to be inspected by the mayor and the council, to see if it were fit for further service or not.

And then it was to be decided whether it was to show its light in future for the inhabitants of some suburb, or in the country in some factory: perhaps it would have to go at once into an iron foundry to be melted down. In this last case anything might be made of it; but the question whether it would remember, in its new state, that it had been a Street Lamp, troubled it terribly. Whatever might happen, this much was certain, that it would be separated from the watchman and his wife, whom it had got to look upon as quite belonging to its family. When the Lamp had been hung up for the first time the watchman was a young sturdy man: it happened to be the very evening on which he entered on his office. Yes, that was certainly a long time ago, when it first became a Lamp and he a watchman. The wife was a little proud in those days. Only in the evening, when she went by, she deigned to glance at the Lamp; in the daytime never. But now, in these latter years, when all three, the watchman, his wife, and the Lamp, had grown old, the wife had also tended it, cleaned it, and provided it with oil. The two old people were thoroughly honest; never had they cheated the Lamp of a single drop of the oil provided for it.

It was the Lamp's last night in the street, and tomorrow it was to go to the council house;—those were two dark thoughts! No wonder that it did not burn brightly. But many other thoughts passed through its brain. On what a number of events had it shone—how much it had seen! Perhaps as much as the mayor and the whole council had beheld. But it did not give utterance to these thoughts, for it was a good honest old Lamp, that would not willingly hurt anyone, and least of all those in authority. Many things passed through its mind, and at times its light flashed up. In such moments it had a feeling that it, too, would be remembered.

"There was that handsome young man—it is certainly a long while ago—he had a letter on pink paper with a gilt edge. It was so prettily written, as if by a lady's hand. Twice he read it, and kissed it, and looked up to me with eyes which said plainly, 'I am the happiest of men!' Only he and I know what was written in this first letter from his true love. Yes, I remember another pair of eyes. It is wonderful how our thoughts fly about! There was a funeral procession in the street: the young beautiful lady lay in the decorated hearse, in a coffin adorned

with flowers and wreaths; and a number of torches quite darkened my light. The people stood in crowds by the houses, and all followed the procession. But when the torches had passed from before my face, and I looked round, a single person stood leaning against my post, weeping. I shall never forget the mournful eyes that looked up to me!"

This and similar thoughts occupied the old Street Lantern, which shone tonight for the last time.

The sentry relieved from his post, at least knows who is to succeed him, and may whisper a few words to him; but the Lamp did not know its successor; and yet it might have given a few useful hints with respect to rain and fog, and some information as to how far the rays of the moon lit up the pavement, from what direction the wind usually came, and much more of the same kind.

On the bridge of the gutter stood three persons who wished to introduce themselves to the Lamp, for they thought the Lamp itself could appoint its successor. The first was a herring's head, that could gleam with light in the darkness. He thought it would be a great saving of oil if they put him up on the post. Number two was a piece of rotten wood, which also glimmers in the dark. He conceived himself descended from an old stem, once the pride of the forest. The third person was a glow-worm. Where this one had come from the Lamp could not imagine; but there it was, and it could give light. But the rotten wood and the herring's head swore by all that was good that it only gave light at certain times, and could not be brought into competition with themselves.

The old Lamp declared that not one of them gave sufficient light to fill the office of a street lamp; but not one of them would believe this. When they heard that the Lamp had not the office to give away, they were very glad of it, and declared that the Lamp was too decrepit to make a good choice.

At the same moment the Wind came careering from the corner of the street, and blew through the air holes of the old Street Lamp.

"What's this I hear?" he asked. "Are you to go away tomorrow? Do I see you for the last time? Then I must make you a present at parting. I will blow into your brainbox in such a way that you shall be able in future not only to remember everything you have seen and heard, but that you shall have such light within you as shall enable you to see all that is read of or spoken of in your presence."

"Yes, that is really much, very much!" said the old Lamp. "I thank you heartily. I only hope I shall not be melted down."

"That is not likely to happen at once," said the Wind. "Now I will blow a memory into you: if you receive several presents of this kind, you may pass your old days very agreeably."

"If I am only not melted down!" said the Lamp again. "Or shall I retain my memory even in that case?"

"Be sensible, old Lamp," said the Wind. And he blew, and at that moment the Moon stepped forth from behind the clouds.

"What will you give the old Lamp?" asked the Wind.

"I'll give nothing," replied the Moon. "I am on the wane, and the lamps never lighted me; but, on the contrary, I've often given light for the lamps."

And with these words the Moon hid herself again behind the clouds, to be safe from further importunity.

A drop now fell upon the Lamp, as if from the roof; but the drop explained that it came from the clouds, and was a present—perhaps the best present possible.

"I shall penetrate you so completely that you shall receive the faculty, if you wish it, to turn into rust in one night, and to crumble into dust."

The Lamp considered this a bad present, and the Wind thought so too.

"Does no one give more? does no one give more?" it blew as loud as it could.

Then a bright shooting star fell down, forming a long bright stripe.

"What was that?" cried the Herring's Head. "Did not a star fall? I really think it went into the Lamp! Certainly if such high-born personages try for this office, we may say good-night and go home."

And so they did, all three. But the old Lamp shed a marvelous strong light around.

"That was a glorious present," it said. "The bright stars which I have always admired, and which shine as I could never shine though I shone with all my might, have noticed me, a poor old lamp, and have sent me a present, by giving me the faculty that all I remember and see as clearly as if it stood before me, shall also be seen by all whom I love. And in this lies the true pleasure; for joy that we cannot share with others is only half enjoyed."

"That sentiment does honor to your heart," said the Wind. "But for that wax lights are necessary. If these are not lit up in you, your rare faculties will be of no use to others. Look you, the stars did not think of that; they take you and every other light for wax. But I will go down." And he went down.

"Good heavens! wax lights!" exclaimed the Lamp. "I never had those till now, nor am I likely to get them! If I am only not melted down!"

The next day—yes, it will be best that we pass over the next day. The next evening the Lamp was resting in a grandfather's chair. And guess where! In the watchman's dwelling. He had begged as a favor of the

mayor and the council that he might keep the Street Lamp, in consideration of his long and faithful service, for he himself had put up and lit the lantern for the first time on the first day of entering on his duties four and twenty years ago. He looked upon it as his child, for he had no other. And the Lamp was given to him.

Now it lay in the great armchair by the warm stove. It seemed as if the Lamp had grown bigger, now that it occupied the chair all alone.

The old people sat at supper, and looked kindly at the old Lamp, to whom they would willingly have granted a place at their table.

Their dwelling was certainly only a cellar two yards below the foot path, and one had to cross a stone passage to get into the room. But within it was very comfortable and warm, and strips of list had been nailed to the door. Everything looked clean and neat, and there were curtains round the bed and the little windows. On the window sill stood two curious flower pots, which sailor Christian had brought home from the East or West Indies. They were only of clay, and represented two elephants. The backs of these creatures had been cut off; and instead of them there bloomed from within the earth with which one elephant was filled, some very excellent chives, and that was the kitchen garden; out of the other grew a great geranium, and that was the flower garden. On the wall hung a great colored print representing the Congress of Vienna. There you had all the Kings and Emperors at once. A clock with heavy weights went "tick! tick!" and in fact it always went too fast; but the old people declared this was far better than if it went too slow. They ate their supper, and the Street Lamp lay, as I have said, in the armchair close beside the stove. It seemed to the Lamp as if the whole world had been turned round. But when the old watchman looked at it, and spoke of all that they two had gone through in rain and in fog, in the bright short nights of summer and in the long winter nights, when the snow beat down, and one longed to be at home in the cellar, then the old Lamp found its wits again. It saw everything as clearly as if it was happening then; yes, the Wind had kindled a capital light for it.

The old people were very active and industrious; not a single hour was wasted in idleness. On Sunday afternoon some book or other was brought out; generally a book of travels. And the old man read aloud about Africa, about the great woods, with elephants running about wild; and the old woman listened intently, and looked furtively at the clay elephants which served for flower pots.

"I can almost imagine it to myself!" said she.

And the Lamp wished particularly that a wax candle had been there, and could be lighted up in it; for then the old woman would be able to see everything to the smallest detail, just as the Lamp saw it—the tall

trees with great branches all entwined, the naked black men on horseback, and whole droves of elephants crashing through the reeds with their broad clumsy feet.

"Of what use are all my faculties if I can't obtain a wax light?" sighed the Lamp. "They have only oil and tallow candles, and that's not enough."

One day a great number of wax candle ends came down into the cellar: the larger pieces were burned, and the smaller ones the old woman used for waxing her thread. So there were wax candles enough; but no one thought of putting a little piece into the Lamp.

"Here I stand with my rare faculties!" thought the Lamp. "I carry everything within me, and cannot let them partake of it; they don't know that I am able to cover these white walls with the most gorgeous tapestry, to change them into noble forests, and all that they can possibly wish."

The Lamp, however, was kept neat and clean, and stood all shining in a corner, where it caught the eyes of all. Strangers considered it a bit of old rubbish; but the old people did not care for that; they loved the Lamp.

One day—it was the old watchman's birthday—the old woman approached the Lamp, smiling to herself, and said—

"I'll make an illumination today, in honor of my old man!"

And the Lamp rattled its metal cover, for it thought, "Well, at last there will be a light within me." But only oil was produced, and no wax light appeared. The Lamp burned throughout the whole evening, but now understood, only too well, that the gift of the stars would be a hidden treasure for all its life. Then it had a dream: for one possessing its rare faculties to dream was not difficult. It seemed as if the old people were dead, and that itself had been taken to the iron foundry to be melted down. It felt as much alarmed as on that day when it was to appear in the council house to be inspected by the mayor and council. But though the power had been given to it to fall into rust and dust at will, it did not use this power. It was put into the furnace, and turned into an iron candlestick, as fair a candlestick as you would desire—one on which wax lights were to be burned. It had received the form of an angel holding a great nosegay; and the wax light was to be placed in the middle of the nosegay.

The candlestick had a place assigned to it on a green writing table. The room was very comfortable; many books stood round about the walls, which were hung with beautiful pictures: it belonged to a poet. Everything that he wrote or composed showed itself round about him. Nature appeared sometimes in thick dark forests, sometimes in beautiful meadows, where the storks strutted about; sometimes again in a

ship sailing on the foaming ocean, or in the blue sky with all its stars.

"What faculties lie hidden in me!" said the old Lamp, when it awoke. "I could almost wish to be melted down! But, no! that must not be so long as the old people live. They love me for myself; they have cleaned me and brought me oil. I am as well off now as the whole Congress, in looking at which they also take pleasure."

And from that time it enjoyed more inward peace; and the honest old Street Lamp had well deserved to enjoy it.

A PICTURE BOOK WITHOUT PICTURES

INTRODUCTION

IT IS WONDERFUL! at those very times when I am conscious of the warmest and best feelings, my hand and tongue are tied, so that I can express nothing, nor utter any of the thoughts in my heart. And yet I am a painter: my eye tells me this, and every one has acknowledged it who has seen my sketches and my pictures.

I am a poor fellow, living in one of the narrowest of streets; yet there is plenty of light, for I live high up, and have a view over all the roofs. For some days after I first came to town, the whole scene seemed crowded and yet lonely. In place of the groves and green hills, I saw nothing but dark gray chimneys, as far as my eye could reach. I met no one I knew.

One evening I was standing, with a heavy heart, at the window. I opened it and looked out. Imagine my delight, when I beheld the face of an old friend—a round, kind face, looking down on me—my best friend in my little garret. It was the Moon, the dear old Moon, with the same unaltered gleam, just as she appeared when, through the branches of the willows, she used to shine upon me as I sat on the mossy bank beside the river. I threw her a kiss, and she beamed full into my room, and promised to look in upon me whenever she went out; and this she has faithfully done. At every visit she tells me of one thing or another that she has seen during the past night, in her silent passage across the sky. "Sketch what I relate to you," said the Moon at her first visit, "and you will have a pretty picture book." I acted upon the hint: in my own fashion I could give a new *Thousand and One Nights* in pictures, but this would be too tedious. The sketches I present are not selected, but given as I received them: a painter, poet, or musician might make some-

thing of them. What I offer are merely slight sketches upon paper, the framework of my thought. The Moon came not every evening—a cloud often intervened.

FIRST EVENING

Last night—these are the Moon's own words—I sailed through the clear air of India. I mirrored myself in the Ganges. My beams struggled to force a way through the thick roof of the old plane-trees, close and compact like the shell upon the tortoise. From out the thicket stepped a Hindoo maiden, slender as a gazelle, beautiful as Eve. There was something truly ethereal, yet at the same time of earthly beauty, about the Indian girl. I could discern her thoughts beneath her delicate skin. The thorny tendrils of the liana tore her sandals; but she stepped swiftly through them. The wild beasts that came up from the river, where they had been to quench their thirst, fled timidly away, for the maiden held a burning lamp in her hand. I could see the fresh blood in those delicate fingers, which were arched into a screen over the flame of the lamp. She approached the river, placed the lamp upon the water, and the lamp sailed away with the stream. The air was agitated, and it seemed that it must put out the light; but still the flame burned on, and the maiden's dark and sparkling eyes followed it, with a soul-speaking glance from beneath the long silken lashes of her eyelids. Well she knew that if the lamp burned so long as she could follow it with her eye, her lover would be alive; but if it went out, then he would be dead. And the lamp burned and flickered, and the maiden's heart burned and quivered. She knelt down and said a prayer. Beside her lay a deadly serpent in the grass; but she thought only of Brahma, and of her beloved. "He lives!" she cried exultingly; and echo resounded from the hills, "He lives!"

SECOND EVENING

It was only last night (said the Moon) that I peeped into a small courtyard, inclosed by houses: there was a hen, with eleven chickens. A pretty little girl was skipping about. The hen clucked, and spread out her wings over her little ones. Then came the maiden's father, and scolded the child; and I passed on, without thinking more of it at the moment.

This evening—but a few minutes ago—I again peeped into the same yard. All was silent; but soon the little maiden came. She crept cautiously to the hen house, lifted the latch, and stole gently up to the hen and the chickens. The hen clucked aloud, and they all ran fluttering

about: the little girl ran after them. I saw it plainly, for I peeped in through a chink in the wall. I was vexed with the naughty child, and was glad that the father came and scolded her still more than yesterday, and seized her by the arm. She bent her head back; big tears stood in her blue eyes. "What are you doing here?" he asked. She wept. "I wanted to go in and kiss the hen, and beg her to forgive me for yesterday. But I could not tell it you." And the father kissed the brow of the innocent child; but I kissed her eyes and lips.

THIRD EVENING

In the narrow lane near by—so narrow that my beams can only glide down the walls of the houses for a minute, and yet in that minute I see enough to understand the little world that stirs below—I saw a woman. Sixteen years ago she was a child. Out in the country, she used to play in the garden of the old parsonage. The hedgerows of roses were already old, and had shed their blossoms. They had run wild, and grew rankly in the walks and alleys, and wreathed their long shoots up the stems of the apple trees: here and there a rose still sat upon her stem, not indeed so lovely as the queen of the flowers appears, but still there was color, and a perfume too. The Vicar's little daughter appeared to me a far fairer rose, as she sat upon her little bench under the tangled hedge, and kissed the squeezed-in pasteboard cheeks of her doll.

Then years later I saw her again. I saw her in a splendid ball-room: she was the lovely bride of a rich merchant. I rejoiced in her good fortune: I sought her again in silent evenings—ah, no one heeded my clear eye, my constant glance! My rose too grew up in untrained wildness, like the roses in the garden of the parsonage. Life in the everyday world also has its tragedy. This evening I witnessed a closing act.

In the narrow lane, she lay upon her bed, close to death; and the wicked landlord, rude and cold-hearted—now her only hold left—tore the curtains open. "Up, up!" he cried; "your cheeks are enough to frighten one. Fix yourself up! Get money, or I'll turn you into the street. Quick! up with you! quick!"

"The hand of death is upon me," she replied. "Spare me—let me rest!" But he dragged her up, painted her cheeks, stuck roses in her hair, set her at the window, with a lighted candle beside her, and left the house. My eye was riveted upon her. She sat motionless: her hands only sank down into her lap. The wind blew against the window, and a pane was broken. But she sat still and silent. The window curtain fluttered, like a flame, about her—she was dead. From the open window the dead one still preached a moral: my Rose from the garden of the parsonage!

FOURTH EVENING

This evening I was at a German play, said the Moon. It was in a small town, and a stable had been turned into a theatre: the stalls remained, and were fitted up and decorated as boxes, and all the woodwork was covered with colored paper. Under the low roof hung a small chandelier, formed of a hoop with candles stuck in it; and over this was fastened an inverted tub, in order that, as on the stage of a large theatre, the lights might be drawn up when the prompter's bell begins to tinkle.

"Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle!" and the little chandelier made a skip of half a yard. By this the folks knew that the play was going to begin.

A young nobleman with his lady, passing through the town, were at the play, and the house was consequently overcrowded. But the clear space under the chandelier looked like a small crater: not a soul sat in this spot, for the candles of the chandelier dripped down—drop! drop!

I could easily see all that passed, for it was so hot that the wickets had to be opened; at every wicket the heads of servant girls and lads outside were now seen peeping in, even though policemen were posted inside the door, and threatened the intruders with their sticks. Close to the orchestra was seen the youthful and noble pair, seated in two old armchairs, which were usually reserved for the burgomaster and his lady. Tonight, however, those worthies had to sit for once on the wooden benches, like the rest of the townsfolk. "Aye, look ye there now—one sparrow hawk in turn outflies another!" whispered the women to one another; and everything took a more stately turn on this memorable occasion. The chandelier danced, the mob pressed forward, and got a rap on the knuckle for their pains, and I—yes, indeed, the Moon was also there with the people during the play.

FIFTH EVENING

Yesterday, said the Moon, I looked down upon Paris—busy, restless Paris: my glance penetrated into the apartments of the Louvre. An aged grandmother, poorly clad—she was a charity ward—followed an attendant into the large, empty throne room. She wanted to see it—she must see it; many a franc-pièce and many a civil word it had doubtless cost her, before she succeeded in making her way so far into the palace.

The poor woman clasped her emaciated hands, and looked solemnly around, as if she were standing in a church. "It was here!" she said "here!" And she approached the throne, from which hung down the rich gold-edged velvet covering. "There!" said she; "there!" and she bent her knee, and kissed the purple hangings. I wept—she wept.

"'Twas not this velvet," said the attendant, and a smile played on his lips.

"And yet it was here!" said the old woman; "and it had the same look then."

"The same, and yet not the same," replied the man. "On that day the windows were smashed in, the doors burst open, and the floor ran with blood; and yet you may with truth say, your grandson died upon the throne."

"Died," repeated the old woman. No more words passed, I believe.

They soon left the apartment: the evening twilight faded away, and my light streamed with increased brightness upon the rich velvet hangings of the throne of France. Who, thinkest thou, was the old woman? I will relate a story to you.

It was in the Revolution of July, toward the close of the evening that preceded the most brilliant day of victory, when every house was a fortress, every window a barricade. The people stormed the Tuileries; women and children even fighting amongst the combatants: the crowd forced their way through the apartments and halls of the palace. A poor, half-grown lad, in rags, fought bravely in the ranks with his older comrades; until at length he sank upon the floor, pierced with death-wounds from half a dozen bayonets. This passed in the throne room, and the bleeding body was laid upon the throne of France: his wounds were partly covered with the velvet hangings, and his blood streamed over the royal purple. What a picture! the magnificent hall—the knots of fighters! A broken standard lay upon the ground, the tricolored flag waved over the bayonets; and upon the throne lay the poor lad, his pallid features marked with the transfiguration of death: the eyes turned heavenward, the limbs were already stiffened in the cramps of death: over his naked breast, over his tattered shirt, was thrown the rich velvet drapery, with its silver lilies. It had been foretold to the lad that he should die upon the throne of France. His mother, in her love, had dreamt of a second Napoleon. My beam has kissed the wreath of flowers upon his grave—my beam has in the past night kissed the brow of the aged grandmother, when she saw in a dream the picture which you may draw: the poor and ragged boy upon the throne of France.

SIXTH EVENING

I have been at Upsala, said the Moon. I looked down upon the broad plains, flagged with short turf, and upon the desolate fields: I mirrored myself in the river Fyris, while the steamboat frightened away the fish into their sedgy retreats. The clouds chased one another beneath me, and cast their long shadows upon the graves of Odin, Thor, and Freya,

as the hills there are called. Names may be seen cut in the thin turf upon the heights; for there is here no building-stone whereon the traveler could engrave a mark, no wall of rock whereon to carve his name. The visitor therefore here cuts the turf, and the naked earth is covered with a network of letters and names along the range of hills—an immortality which the next growth of turf effaces.

There stood a man upon the hilltop—a poet. He emptied a mead horn, ornamented with a broad silver ring, and whispered a name, which he charged the breezes not to betray; but I heard the name, for I knew it. An earl's coronet sparkled above it, and therefore he named it not aloud. I smiled. And does not a poet's crown sparkle above his? Eleonora d'Este's nobility is one with Tasso's name. I, too, know where blooms the rose of beauty.

So spake the Moon; and then a cloud passed before her face. O that clouds might never intervene between the poet and the rose!

SEVENTH EVENING

Along the seashore stretches a grove of oaks and beeches, fresh and fragrant, which a hundred nightingales visit with every return of spring. The road lies between this grove and the ocean. Carriages roll past, one after another, but I follow them not: my glance rests upon one spot—a soldier's grave. The blackberry and the sloe spring up between the stones. Here lives the poetry of nature: how thinkest thou man reads it? Listen, and I will tell you what I heard last evening and in the past night.

First came two wealthy country folks jogging along in their chaise. "Splendid trees those!" said one; "every tree would yield at least ten cartloads of firewood: we shall have a hard winter. Last year, you remember, we got fourteen dollars a load." So saying, they passed on.

"What a dreadful road!" said another man, driving past in his carriage. "This all comes from the cursed trees," answered his companion: "the only inlet for the air is from the sea." They drove on.

The stagecoach now came up: all the passengers were fast asleep, just in the most lovely part of the journey. The driver blew his horn; but he only thought to himself, "Very well blown—what a capital echo there is just here! but what do those sleepy folks inside care for it?" And the stagecoach disappeared.

Then came two young lads, galloping along on horseback, with all the fire and spirit of youth. They, too, looked with a smile upon the moss-green hills and the dark thicket. "I should like well enough to be walking here with pretty Christina, the miller's daughter," said one; and off they rode.

The flowers perfumed the air; every breath of wind was still; the ocean seemed, as it were, a part of the heaven, which overspanned the deep valley. A coach rolled past, in which were six persons. Four were asleep; the fifth was deep in thought, reflecting how his new summer coat would become him; the sixth popped his head out of the window, and turning to the coachman, asked whether there was anything remarkable in the heap of stones by the roadside. "Why, no," said the driver; "'tis nothing but a heap of stones; but the trees yonder—they are indeed worth looking at."—"Tell me about them."—"Aye, aye, they are remarkable if you will," said the man; "in the winter, when the snow is so deep that 'tis hard to keep to the right road, the trees are signposts to me, so that I am able to find my way, and avoid driving into the sea. What say you now—aren't they remarkable?" And so saying he drove on.

Now came a painter. His eyes sparkled; he spoke not a word, but only whistled to himself. The nightingales sang, one louder and more sweetly than another. "Hold your noise!" he exclaimed hastily. He was remarking attentively all the colors and tints in the landscape. "Blue, purple, dark brown: what a glorious picture this would make!" His mind received it all, just as a mirror does a picture, and he whistled from time to time a march of Rossini's.

The last who came was a poor maiden. She sat down to rest upon the soldier's grave, and laid her bundle on the ground. Her lovely, pallid face was inclined, as if listening, in the direction of the grove; her eye sparkled, as she raised it again over the ocean heavenward. Her hands were clasped. She prayed—repeating, I believe, the Lord's Prayer. She did not herself fully comprehend the feeling that pervaded her breast; but well do I know, that year after year that moment will in memory invest the scene around her with more beautiful, yea, and with richer hues than the precise colors in which the artist painted it. My beams followed her, until the morning twilight kissed her brow.

EIGHTH EVENING

Dark masses of clouds obscured the heaven: the Moon came not forth at all. I stood in double loneliness in my little chamber, and looked up into the region of air, from whence she should have appeared.

My thoughts flew far, far around, up to the friend who is wont each evening to tell me such lovely stories, and to show me pictures. What scenes indeed has she not lived to see! She floated over the waters of the Deluge, and smiled down upon the Ark, as she does now on me, and proclaimed the glad tidings of hope, that a new world should bloom again. When the people of Israel sat weeping beside the rivers of

Babylon, she, too, looked in sorrow through the willows whereon they hung their harps. When Romeo climbed up the balcony, and the kiss of love rose from the earth like a cherub's thought, the Moon's shield stood half curtained behind the dark cypresses in the transparent expanse of air. She has seen the hero at St. Helena, when from the lonely cliff he looked forth upon the ocean, and his breast swelled with mighty thoughts. Yea, indeed, what cannot the Moon relate? The world's history is to her a book of adventures. Tonight I see thee not, old friend, and for this once cannot note down any picture in memory of thy visit.

And as I stood thus looking up dreamingly at the firmament, a stream of light came forth. It was a beam of the Moon—but it soon vanished: black clouds glided over her face. And yet it had been a greeting, a kind evening greeting, sent me by the Moon.

NINTH EVENING

The air was again clear, and the Moon was in her first quarter. A thought struck me for a sketch. Hear what the Moon related to me.

I followed the polar bird and the whale to the eastern coast of Greenland. Naked rocks, covered with ice and clouds, compassed in a valley, where twining willows and bilberry plants were just in their richest blossom, and the fragrant *Lychnis* breathed forth its perfume. My light was feeble; my keel was like the *acanthus* leaf, torn from its stalk and driven about for weeks upon the water. The northern lights burned with a broad belt, from which shot forth streams of fire in whirling columns over the whole of heaven, playing in strange coruscations of red and green.

The people who dwelt around had assembled for a dance, and merriment of various kinds; but there was probably none in whose accustomed eye the splendor of the scene would excite wonder. "Let the souls of the dead play at ball with the head of the walrus!" So thought they, in accordance with their popular belief: they had only mind and eye for the song and the dance.

In the middle of the circle stood a Greenlander; his fur cloak was thrown aside, and, beating on his hand-drum, he began a song about the seal, to which all present responded with an "Eia, Eia!" hopping round and round in a circle, dressed in their white fur coats. The scene was like a dance of bears: eyes and heads moved in the strangest manner. Now began the judgment and sentence: those who had come in enmity stepped forward, and the injured person recited, with a bold tone of ridicule, the faults of his antagonist, and all accompanied by the

dance and the drum. The accused answered with equal skill, while all the people laughed, and meanwhile pronounced the sentence.

A sound reverberated among the rocks like a peal of thunder; the ice fields above had split into pieces, and the huge precipitated masses descended in showers of dust. It was indeed a beautiful summer night in Greenland.

A hundred yards off, beneath an open tent of skins, lay a sick man. Life still stirred in his warm blood, and yet die he must; for he believed it, and all around believed it too. His wife was already sewing the skin covering tight around his limbs, that she might not afterward have to touch the dead body; and she asked him, "Wilt thou be buried high up upon the rocks, in the firm bed of snow? I will deck the spot with thy kajab and with thy arrows, and the Angekobb shall dance over it. Or wilt thou rather be sunk deep into the sea?"

"Into the sea!" replied the sick man; and his head inclined faintly, and a sad smile was on his cheek.

"Aye, it is a mild summer tent," said his wife; "the seals sport about there, the walrus sleeps at your feet, and the chase is safe and pleasant."

But the children with lamentings tore away the stretched skin from the entrance, that the dying man might be borne out to the sea, to the swelling ocean, which in his life had given him food, and was now to yield him repose in death. The floating ice fields form his tombstone, as they pass hither and thither by day and by night. Seals slumber upon the ice blocks: the storm bird drifts aloft over the spot.

TENTH EVENING

I knew an old maid, said the Moon. Winter after winter she wore a yellow satin cloak trimmed with fur, which might be said never to grow old, for it was her only fashion. Every summer she wore the same straw hat, and, as I fancy, the same grayish blue gown. She only stirred from home to visit an old friend, who dwelt nearly opposite; but during the last few years even these visits ceased—her friend was dead. In her solitude the old lady used to trip about before the window, at which all summer long stood a row of pretty flowers; and in winter a fine crop of mustard and cress flourished upon the crown of a beaver hat.

During the last month she sat no longer at the window; nevertheless I knew that she was still living, for I had not yet seen her set out on the great journey which had been so frequent a subject of talk between the old lady and her friend. "Yes," she would say, "I shall one day, when I die, make a longer journey than I ever did in my lifetime. Six

miles hence is the family vault, where they will carry me, that I may sleep with the rest of my family."

Last night a hearse stopped before the house, and a coffin was carried out. Then I knew that she had died. They put straw and matting around the coffin, and drove off. So slept now the quiet old maid, who in the last few years of her life had never left the house. And the hearse rolled quickly out of the town, as if going on a journey of pleasure. From time to time the driver looked timidly round: I fancy he was in some dread of seeing her seated behind him on the coffin, in the yellow satin cloak. And all the while he lashed his horses recklessly, yet holding in the reins as tightly as he could, until the bits were covered with foam. The horses were young and spirited: a hare darted across the road, and they became unmanageable and ran away. The quiet old maid, who from year's end to year's end had only moved about with a slow and noiseless step, in the circular course of habit, was now, a lifeless corpse, driven and hurried along the highroad over stick and stone. The coffin, with its covering of straw, was tossed up into the air, and fell upon the road; whilst horses, hearse, and driver dashed wildly off.

A lark rose singing from the field, warbled its morning hymn over the coffin, and then alighted upon it, pecking at the straw matting with its beak: but the chrysalis had already burst its prison, and the spirit was freed from its confinement. The lark rose exultingly again, and I veiled my face behind the reddening clouds of morning.

ELEVENTH EVENING

I will give you a sketch of Pompeii, said the Moon. I was outside the city, in the Street of Tombs, as it is called, where the beautiful monuments are standing; where, exulting in their mirth, and wreathing their brows with roses, youths once danced with the fair sisters of Lais. The spot is now the abode of death.

German soldiers, in the pay of Naples, were on guard, playing with cards and dice. A party of foreigners, from over the mountains, walked into the city, attended by a guard. They had come to view, in my full and clear light, the city arisen from the tomb. I showed them the track of the carriage-wheels, in the streets paved with flag-stones of lava. I showed them the names upon the doors, and the signs of the various crafts still hanging before the houses. In the narrow courts they saw the cistern decked with shells, in which the fountains had played. But the waters played no more, the song was no longer heard from the richly painted chambers, before the doors of which dogs of bronze kept watch. It was the City of the Dead. Vesuvius

alone still thundered forth his eternal hymn, each single strophe of which men call a new eruption. We went to the Temple of Venus, built of dazzling white marble: the weeping willow has sprung up between the columns. The air was transparently clear, and in the background stood Vesuvius, black as night, from which the flames arose straight as the stem of a pine tree. The illumined cloud of smoke lay in the still calm of night, like the pine tree's crown, but red as blood.

A lady singer was one of the party—a truly noble singer: I have witnessed the homage paid her in the first cities of Europe. They approached an amphitheatre, and sat down upon the stone steps: a small open space was filled, as the whole building was thousands of years ago. There was still the stage, as in past times, with its bricked sidewalls, and the two arches in the background, through which the same scenery was now visible as in former ages, Nature herself displaying to our view the hills between Sorrento and Amalfi.

The lady, in sport, descended to the stage and sang. The recollections of the spot inspired her. It put me in mind of the free Arab steed, when he snorts, and his mane stands erect, and he dashes off in his wild course. Here was the same ease and confidence. And sounds arose all around, as they did so many ages ago upon this selfsame spot, shouts of applause and the clapping of hands.

Three minutes later, and the scene was deserted: all were gone; not a sound was longer heard. But the ruin stood, unchanged, as it will stand for ages yet to come. The acclamations of the moment have died away, the song of the singer is mute, her notes and her smiles—all are forgotten, and passed away like a dream. Even to me this hour carries with it but a transient reminiscence.

TWELFTH EVENING

I looked in at the window of a newspaper editor in a German town, said the Moon. The room was handsomely furnished, the shelves well lined with books, and a chaos of newspapers was scattered about. Several young men were in the room. The editor himself stood at his desk, and before him lay two little books, both by anonymous authors, which were to be reviewed.

"Here is a book that has been sent me," said he: "I have not yet read it, but 'tis prettily got up; what say you to its contents?"

"Why," replied one of the young men, who was himself a poet, "all very good, with the exception of some few things: but then, good Lord! he is only a young man. 'Tis true the verses might be improved; the ideas are sound enough; pity only that they are so commonplace! But what say you? We cannot always expect originality. You may

perhaps give him a lift, but in my opinion it is clear that he will never be anything great as a poet. Still he has read a good deal, he is an Oriental scholar, and shows very fair critical powers; it was he who wrote the pretty review of my 'Life in the Present Day.' After all we must make allowance for a young author."

"Nay, but he is a downright ass," said another gentleman in the room. "In poetry nothing is worse than mediocrity; depend on it, he will never rise any higher."

"Poor devil!" said a third. "And yet his aunt is so proud of him—the lady, Mr. Editor, who got the list of subscribers to your last volume of translations."

"Excellent woman! Well, I have given just a brief notice of the book—unquestionable talent, a welcome gift, a flower in the garden of poetry, well got up, etc. But now for the other book: I suppose I shall have to purchase that. I have heard it praised; the author has genius—eh?"

"Why, so everybody says," replied the poet; "but it is wild and unpolished. His punctuation to be sure is full of genius. Trust me, it will do him good to be sharply handled; he gets far too high notions of himself."

"Nay, nay, you are unjust," interrupted a fourth. "Do not let us carp at trifles, but rather find pleasure in what is good, and really there is much here to praise; he writes better than all the rest put together."

"Heaven help him! If he is such a mighty genius, he may very well bear a sharp corrective. There are folks enough to extol him in private; don't let us drive him mad with flattery."

The editor resumed his pen, and wrote: "Evident talent—usual negligence here and there—shows that he can write bad verses as well as good (see page twenty-five, where there are two hiatus)—we recommend to him the study of the classics," etc.

I passed on, said the Moon, and peeped through the window of the aunt's house. There sat the honored poet, the tame one, I mean, receiving the homage of all the guests; and he was happy.

I sought the other poet, the wild one. He likewise was in a large assembly, and he too had his patron. His rival's book was the theme of conversation. "I shall some time or other read your poems," said the Mæcenas: "but to speak honestly—you know I never say otherwise than I think—I do not expect much from them. You are in my opinion too wild, too fanciful. But as a man, I have nothing to say; you are highly respectable."

A young girl sat in a corner, reading a book: "The glory of beauty shall be trodden in the dust: the works of the dust shall glory in their shame. It is an old story, and yet daily new!"

THIRTEENTH EVENING

The Moon spoke. Beside the forest path stand two cottages; their doors are low, the windows placed irregularly; whitethorn and barberries climb around them. The mossy roof is overgrown with yellow flowers and houseleek. In the little garden are only cabbages and potatoes; but in the hedge stands a lilac tree in blossom. Beneath it sat a little girl: her eyes were fixed upon the old oak tree between the cottages, on whose tall and withered trunk, which is sawn off at the top, a stork has built its nest. He stood above, and rattled his bill. A little boy came out, and stood beside the girl: they were brother and sister.

"What are you looking at?" he asked.

"I am looking at the stork," she replied. "Granny told me that he will bring us a little brother this evening, or a little sister; and I am watching, that I may see it when it comes."

"The stork brings nothing," said the boy; "trust me. Granny told me so, too, but she was only joking; and then I asked her if she dared say so upon the Bible: no, she dared not do that, and I know well enough that what they say about the stork is only a story to please children."

"But where then is the baby to come from?" said the girl.

"Our Lord brings it," said the boy. "God has it under his mantle; but no one can see God, and therefore we cannot see that He brings it."

The breeze stirred in the branches of the lilac tree. The children folded their hands, and looked at one another: surely it was God, who had come with the little baby! and they took each other by the hand. The cottage door opened, and the grandmother called to them and said, "Come here, and see what the stork has brought you—a little brother!" The children nodded, as if they already knew that he had come.

FOURTEENTH EVENING

I sailed over Luneburg Heath, said the Moon. There stood a lonely cottage by the roadside. A few withered bushes grew around it, in which a nightingale was singing that had lost her way. In the cold of night she must surely perish; it was her swan's song I heard.

The morning dawned, and a troop of emigrant peasants with their families passed by; they were traveling in the direction of Bremen or Hamburg, to take ship to America, where they looked for brighter days. The women carried the youngest children on their backs, while

the bigger ones skipped along by their side. A miserable hack-horse was dragging a cart, upon which were piled all the chattels they possessed.

The wind blew cold, and a little girl nestled closer to her mother, who looked up at my round orb, now just upon the wane, and thought of the cruel need she had suffered in her home from the heavy taxes which she could not pay. Her thoughts were those of the whole troop. The rosy glimmer of day shone therefore like a ray of promise, the forerunner of a sun of happiness which should rise again. They heard the song of the dying nightingale: to them she seemed no false prophet, but the herald of good fortune. The wind whistled—they understood not its presage: "Sail over the ocean! Ye have paid for the long passage with all that ye possessed; poor and helpless ye will set foot upon your land of promise. Ye may then sell yourselves, your wives, and your children. Yet long ye shall not have to suffer: behind the broad and fragrant leaf lurks the angel of death; his welcome breathes deadly fever into your blood. Sail on then! sail on over the swelling waves!"

And the pilgrims were glad as they listened to the nightingale's song—that surely was of happy import!

The day shone forth from a light veil of mists. The country folks were crossing the heath on their way to church. The women, in their black gowns and with the strip of white linen bound closely round their heads, seemed as if they had stepped out of old church pictures. Wide and dead lay the scene around—the withered heath, parched and murky plains, between white sand hills. The women, their prayer-books in their hands, were going their way to church. "O pray! pray ye for those who wander forth, pilgrims, to their grave, ye who abide on this side of the swelling waves!"

FIFTEENTH EVENING

I knew a Punchinello, said the Moon. The folks all shouted whenever he made his appearance on the stage. All his movements were comical, and raised peals of laughter in the house, although there was nothing in particular to call it forth—it was only his oddity. Even when a mere lad, romping about with the other boys, he was a Punchinello. Nature formed him for the character, by putting a hump upon his back and another on his chest. But the mind that was concealed beneath this deformity was, on the contrary, richly endowed. No one possessed a deeper feeling, a more vigorous elasticity of spirit, than he. The stage was his world of ideals: had he been tall and handsome, every manager would have hailed him as his first tragedian. All that was heroic and

great filled his soul, and still his lot was to be a Punchinello. His very sorrow, his melancholy, heightened the dry comicality of his sharply marked features, and aroused the laughter of a ticklish public, who applauded its favorite.

The lovely Columbine was good and kind to him, and yet she preferred to give her hand to Harlequin. It would indeed have been too comical a thing in reality if "Beauty and the Beast" had married. Whenever Punchinello was dejected, she was the only one who could bring a smile upon his face, but *she* could even make him laugh outright. At first she was melancholy like him, then somewhat calmer, and at last overflowing with fun. "I know well enough what ails you," she said; "it is love, and love alone!" And then he could not help laughing. "Love and I!" he exclaimed; "that would be droll indeed: how the folks would clap and shout!"

"It is love alone," she repeated with a comical pathos; "you love—you love me!"

Aye, people may speak thus when they imagine that in others' hearts there is no love. Punchinello skipped high into the air, and his melancholy was gone. And yet she had spoken the truth; he did love her; he loved her truly fervently, as he loved all that was noble and beautiful in art. On her wedding day he seemed the merriest of the merry; but in the night he wept; had the folks seen his wry face, they would have clapped their hands.

Not long ago Columbine died. On the day when she was buried, Harlequin had leave not to appear upon the boards; was he not a mourning widower? But the manager had to give something very merry, that the public might the less miss the pretty Columbine and the agile Harlequin. So the nimble Punchinello had to be doubly merry: he danced and skipped about—despair in his heart—and all clapped their hands and cried, "Bravo, bravissimo!" Punchinello was called for. O, he was beyond all price!

Last night, after the performance, little Humpback strolled out of the town, toward the lonely churchyard. The wreath of flowers upon Columbine's grave had already faded. There he sat down—it was a perfect picture—his chin resting upon his hand, his eyes turned toward me—a Punchinello upon the grave, peculiar and comical. Had the folks seen their favorite, how they would have clapped and cried, "Bravo, Punchinello! bravo, bravissimo!"

SIXTEENTH EVENING

Hear what the Moon related to me next. Often have I seen young officers, parading for the first time in their splendid uniform; I have

seen maidens in their ball dress; the handsome bride of a prince arrayed in her festal attire; but no joy to be compared to that which I witnessed last evening in a child, a little girl four years of age. She had received a present of a new little blue frock and a new rose-colored bonnet. The finery was already put on, and all present called out for candles, for the light of the moonbeams that shone in at the window was far too little. "Light, light!" was the cry. There stood the maiden as stiff as a doll—her little arms anxiously stretched out from the frock, and the fingers wide apart from each other; and O how her eyes and every feature beamed with joy!

"Tomorrow you shall go out," said her mother. And the little girl looked up at her bonnet, then down at her frock, and smiled with rapture. "Mother," said she, "what will the dogs think when they see me in my smart dress?"

SEVENTEENTH EVENING

I have told you of Pompeii, said the Moon—the corpse of a city, now once more ranked in the catalogue of living cities. I know another far stranger still, which is no corpse, but in truth the phantom of a city. As the fountains splash and play in their marble basins, and the surge breaks upon the shore, I seem as it were to be listening to the tales and adventures of the floating city.

Upon the face of Ocean oft hangs a mist—her widow's veil. The Bridegroom of the Ocean is dead: his city and his citadel are but an empty mausoleum now. Knowest thou this city? In the streets was never heard the rattling of carriages, nor the clatter of the horse's hoof. fishes only swim there, and the black gondola skims like a spectre over the green waters.

I will show you the city's Piazza, her chief square—continued the Moon—and you may imagine yourself in fairyland. The grass springs up between the broad flagstones, and at dawn thousands of pigeons flutter around the isolated tower. Arcades surround you on three sides: beneath them sits the Turk, motionless, with his long pipe; the handsome young Greek, leaning against a pillar, looks up at the trophies placed aloft—at the tall masts, the monument of a bygone power, from which the flags hang down like mourning weepers. A maiden is sitting there to rest; she has set down her heavy pails of water, and the yoke by which she carried them is still upon her shoulders.

The edifice you see before you is no fairy castle—it is a church. The gilded cupolas and the golden balls around it glitter in my light. Those magnificent bronze horses aloft have journeyed, like the bronze horses in the fairy tale: they have traveled into distant lands, and are now

returned again. Seest thou the brilliant colors upon the walls and on the window panes, as if at a child's entreaty some fairy had adorned this temple? Seest thou the winged lion upon yonder column? he glitters still of gold, but his wings are bound. The Lion is dead, for the Ocean King is dead. Void and desolate are the spacious halls, and where the splendid pictures once hung now gape the bare walls. Beggars sleep beneath the arcades, on whose pavement the highest nobles alone were permitted to tread. From out the deep dungeons or the leaden chambers, near the Bridge of Sighs, a sigh sometimes escapes, where once the music of the tambourine in the gay gondola was heard, when from the gorgeous Bucentaur the wedding-ring was thrown into the Adriatic—the affianced Ocean Queen. Shroud thyself in mists, O Adriatic! draw the widow's veil around thy bosom, and enwrap thy bridegroom's sepulchre—marble, spectral Venice!

EIGHTEENTH EVENING

I looked down upon a spacious theatre, said the Moon. The house was filled with spectators, for a new actor made his first appearance. My beam glided through a narrow window in the wall: a rouged face was pressed against the panes: it was the hero of the evening. The knightly beard curled around his chin, but tears stood in the man's eyes, for he had been hissed from the stage, and hissed indeed with reason. Poor fellow! but as times go nothing that is *poor* meets with tolerance in the realm of art. He had deep feeling, and loved art enthusiastically; but Art did not return his love.

The manager's bell again tinkled. In his part occurred these words: "Boldly and valiantly the hero advances." He had to advance indeed—before an audience, to whom he was the butt of ridicule.

When the piece was ended I saw a man, wrapped in a cloak, steal down the stairs: it was he, the condemned actor of the evening. The scene shifters were whispering together. I followed the poor sinner to his garret. To hang one's self is an unseemly death, and poison is not always at hand. He was thinking of both. He looked at his pallid face in the glass, and peeped through his half-closed eyelids to see whether he should look well as a corpse. A man may be most unhappy and at the same time most affected. He thought of death, of suicide: I verily believe he even bewept his own death. He wept bitterly; and when a man has wept till he can weep no more, he no longer thinks of killing himself.

A year had passed, and again a play was acted, but upon a small stage, and by a company of poor itinerant players. Again I saw the well-known face, the rouged cheeks, the curling beard. Again he looked up at me, and smiled: and yet he had once more been hissed from the

stage—hissed scarcely the minute before—hissed too upon a miserable stage, and by a mean and sorry audience.

That same evening a wretched hearse drove out of the gate of the town: no vehicle followed. It was the body of a suicide—it was our poor rouged and whiskered hero. The driver on the box was the only attendant; none followed—none, but the Moon alone. In a corner by the churchyard wall the suicide lies buried: nettles will soon grow over the spot, and the grave digger will fling upon it the weeds and thorns which he roots out from the other graves.

NINETEENTH EVENING

I come from Rome, said the Moon. There in the middle of the city, upon one of the seven hills, stand the ruins of the imperial palace. The wild fig tree grows in the clefts of the wall, and covers the naked masonry with its broad, gray-green leaves. Among heaps of rubbish the jackass treads upon the green laurels, and feeds on the barren thistle. Hither, to this spot, from whence the Roman eagles once flew forth over the wide world—came, saw, and conquered—a narrow entrance now conducts through a miserable clay hovel, wedged in between two broken marble columns. The tendrils of the vine hang down, like mourning wreaths, over the casement.

An old woman, with her little granddaughter, now dwells in the palace of the Cæsars, and shows the place to strangers. A naked wall is all that remains of the splendid banquet hall, and a dark cypress points with its long shadow to the spot where the throne once stood. The earth lies a yard deep upon the broken floor. The little girl, now daughter of the imperial palace, sits there in an evening upon her stool, listening to the vesper bell; or she peeps through the keyhole of a door close by, and looks over the half of Rome and the mighty cupola of St. Peter's.

All was still and silent as usual this evening, and the little girl was returning home in my full and clear light. Upon her head she carried an earthen pitcher of water, of antique form; she was barefooted, and her little petticoat and sleeves were torn. I kissed her finely rounded shoulders, her black eyes, and shining hair. She mounted the steep flight of steps up to the house, formed of the ruined fragments of the wall and a broken capital. The spotted lizards ran affrightedly past at her feet, but she was not startled. Her hand was raised to ring at the door. A hare's foot was suspended to a string—now the bell-rope to the imperial palace. She stood still for a moment: what might she be thinking of? Perchance of the beautiful image of the infant Jesus, clad in silver and gold, in the chapel below, where the silver lamps were burning, and the well-known vesper hymn was chanted. I know not. But again

she went on, and stumbled: the earthen pitcher fell from her head, and broke upon the marble step. She burst into tears: the pretty daughter of the imperial palace wept over the paltry, broken clay pitcher. She stood there, barefooted, and wept, and dared not pull the string, the bell-rope of the imperial palace.

TWENTIETH EVENING

The Moon had not shone for more than a fortnight: at last I saw her again, and she stood round and clear above the slowly rising mass of clouds. Hear what she told me.

I followed a caravan out of one of the towns of Fezzan. The people halted at a short distance from the sandy desert, upon a salt plain, which glistened like a sheet of ice or a glacier, and was covered for a small extent only with the light drift sand. The oldest man among them, at whose belt hung the flask of water, and at whose head, when they rested, lay the sack of unleavened bread—the venerable patriarch of the troop—drew with his staff a square figure on the ground, and wrote in it some words from the Koran. The whole caravan passed over the spot thus consecrated. A young merchant, a son of the Sun—I saw it in his sparkling eye, I read it in the proud beauty of his form—rode pensively along upon his white, snorting steed. Was he thinking of his pretty young wife at home? Two days only had passed since she was carried, a lovely bride, around the walls of the city on the richly caparisoned camel, decked with costly furs and splendid shawls. In that sweet and festal hour the drums and bagpipes sounded, and the women sung, amidst rejoicing and the firing of guns, until the camel itself was excited by the sounds and the music.

But the young man, so lately married, was now journeying with the caravan far away into the desert. I escorted them on their way for many nights, and saw them rest beside the wells, under the palm trees, which were half burnt up by the fierce rays of the sun. A camel dropped, and they plunged the knife into its breast, and roasted the meat at the fire. My beams, which cooled the glowing sand, showed them at the same time the black rocks, dead islands in the vast sandy ocean. They encountered no hostile tribes upon their pathless road; no storms arose; no pillar of sand passed like a destroying angel over the caravan.

Meanwhile at home the lovely young wife prayed for her husband and her father. "Has ill befallen them?" she asked of my golden horn. "Are they dead?" she asked of my beaming orb.

The desert now lies behind them. This evening they are seated beneath the tall palm trees; the crane flies around them flapping her long wings, and the pelican looks trustingly at them from out the boughs of

the mimosa. The luxuriant underwood is trodden down by the heavy tramp of the elephant. A troop of negroes are returning from a market in the interior of the country: the women, with their indigo-blue aprons and their black hair decked with brass buttons, are driving the heavily laden oxen, upon which the naked black children are lying asleep. A negro leads by a rope a tame lion, caught young, which he has purchased.

They approach the caravan. The young merchant remains silent and motionless; he is thinking of his gentle wife; in the land of the Black he is dreaming of his fair and fragrant flower, far away beyond the desert: he raises his head. . . .

A cloud passed before the Moon, and then another cloud. That evening I heard no more.

TWENTY-FIRST EVENING

I saw a little girl weeping, said the Moon: she wept at the unkindness of the wicked world. A splendid doll had been given her; so pretty, so delicate, so elegant a doll—surely she could never have been formed to bear a cross of any kind. But the little girl's brothers, like rude boys, had taken the doll, set it on a high branch of a tree in the garden, and then run away. Poor child! she could not get at her doll, nor help her down from her perilous seat; and this was just the reason why she wept. Doubtless the doll too wept, for she stretched out her arms imploringly through the thick green foliage which formed her airy prison; and it seemed as if a look of terror was pictured on her little cheek, which was usually so rosy and smiling, as she peeped through the leaves.

Yes, this was one of the *misfortunes of life*, of which Mamma so often spoke. Alas, poor doll! the evening twilight was already coming on, and night would soon be here. Had the poor little creature to sit in the tree alone the whole night long, in the open air? Ah, this the little girl could not bear. "I will stay with you!" said she, though in truth she was not overcourageous. She already fancied that she saw the little Nixes with their tall, pointed caps, peeping from the bushes, and long, fearful ghosts dancing about in the alley of chestnut trees—then approaching nearer and nearer, stretching out their hands toward the tree on which the doll was hung, and pointing at her with a malicious grin. O, how the little maiden's heart quailed with fear! "And yet," thought she, "if we have done nothing sinful, the evil spirits cannot harm us. But perhaps I have done some wrong?" She reflected a moment. "Ah, yes indeed!" she exclaimed in a penitent tone: "I laughed at the poor little duck with a red rag round its leg; it limps so drolly—and I laughed at it; but indeed I know how wrong it is to laugh at dumb animals." And

she looked up at her doll. "Have you ever laughed at animals?" she asked. And it had just the appearance as if the doll shook its head.

TWENTY-SECOND EVENING

I looked down upon the Tyrol with a soft and saddened smile, said the Moon, and the pine trees cast their deep shadows upon the rugged rocks. I beheld the colossal figures of St. Christopher, with the infant Jesus on his shoulder, pictured on the walls of the houses, and reaching from the ground up to the gable—of St. Florian pouring water on the burning house—and the figures of Christ upon the large roadside crosses.

High up, between two pointed summits of the western acclivity of the mountain range, stands a lonely nunnery, looking like a swallow's nest wedged in between the rocks. Two of the Sisters were above in the tower, tolling the bell: they were both young, and they looked forth over the mountains into the wide world beyond. A traveling carriage rolled past on the road below; the postilion's horn sounded, and as the poor nuns looked down on it, their thoughts unconsciously followed the glance: a tear glistened in the eye of the younger sister. The horn was heard more and more faintly, until at length the convent bells silenced its dying sound.

TWENTY-THIRD EVENING

Listen now to what the Moon related to me further.

It was many years ago, and in Copenhagen, that I one evening looked in at the window of a poorly furnished room. Father and mother were asleep, but their little son slept not. I saw the chintz bed curtain move, and the blonde, curly head of the child peep out from behind it. At first I fancied that the boy was attracted by the great Bornholm house clock, painted in splendid colors of red and green, with a magnificent cuckoo throned on the top; whilst the light pendulum, with its glittering brass plate, went incessantly tick, tack! tick, tack! as if in defiance of the heavy weights. It was not the clock, however, that the wakeful little fellow was watching so eagerly: his eye was fixed upon his mother's spinning wheel, which stood beneath it. This was by far the most precious thing to him in the house; yet he dared not touch it, unless he wished to get a slap on the hand. He would sit by the hour together beside his mother while she spun, with his eyes riveted on the darning bobbins and the circling wheel; and at those moments he had always his own thoughts. Ah, if he were allowed only once to turn the spinning wheel himself!

His father and mother were asleep: he looked first at them, and then at the tempting spinning wheel. Presently one little naked foot stole out of bed, and then another: in a moment there he stood bolt upright in the room! Once more he turned round, to make quite sure that his father and mother slept on undisturbed: then he stole softly, very softly, with only his little shirt on, up to the object of his innocent childish longing, and began to spin. The cord flew off, but the wheel turned round the more quickly. I kissed his flaxen hair and his bright blue eyes: it was a pretty picture.

Suddenly his mother awoke. The bed curtain moved; she peeped out, and involuntarily thought of the Nis or other little sprite. "In Jesus' name!" she groaned, jogging her husband in affright. He opened his eyes, rubbed them, and looked in astonishment at the industrious little fellow. "Why, that is our boy Bertel!" said he.

My eye turned from the narrow chamber, and in the same instant I looked down into the halls of the Vatican, where stand the marble statues of the gods. I lighted up the group of Laocoön: the stone appeared to sigh. I impressed my silent kiss upon the Muse's breast: I imagined that it heaved. But my beam rested longest on the Nile group, on the colossal figure of the god; leaning upon the Sphinx, there he lay, dreaming and thoughtful, as if musing on the years that had vanished in the lap of the Past. The little Cupids sported playfully with the crocodiles around him. In the huge cornucopia sat a tiny little one, with his arms crossed, and gazing at the stern and mighty River-god, half in awe and half in drollery—the very picture of the little fellow at the spinning wheel, with just the same sweetness of expression. A true and living grace shone in the beautiful little marble child; and yet, since it first came forth from the stone, the wheel of Time has revolved upon its axis more than a thousand times. And again it had to revolve—as many turns as the boy gave to the spinning wheel in the abode of poverty—ere the world should once more witness marble gods like these.

Years passed on, continued the Moon. It was but yesterday that I looked down upon a bay on the eastern coast of Zealand, begirt with noble woods and high banks. There stands an old and stately chateau, surrounded by red walls, and with swans upon the waters of the moat: at a short distance lies a pretty little country town, with an old-fashioned church rising from the midst of fruitful orchards.

A number of little boats, with lights and torches, glided past in a line over the calm surface of the water. The scene was beyond measure solemn. Strains of music floated around—a festal song was sung; and in one of the boats stood a man who was the object of general homage—a tall figure, with a true northern air, a man of still gigantic vigor, not-

withstanding the approach of old age, with blue eyes, and long, white locks: there he stood, wrapt in the folds of a large Italian cloak. I knew him, and thought of the Nile group, and of the marble statues of the gods in the Vatican: I thought of the lowly chamber—I believe it was in the “Grønne-Gade”—where little Bertel, in his short and tight shirt, sat and spun. The wheel of Time has revolved: new gods have sprung forth from the marble. . . . From boat to boat was heard a “Hurra!”—a “Hurra for Bertel Thorwaldsen!”

TWENTY-FOURTH EVENING

I will give you a sketch from Frankfort, said the Moon. My glance was fixed upon *one* building. It was not Goethe's birthplace, nor was it the old town hall, where may still be seen projecting through the grated windows the horned skulls of the oxen which were roasted at the coronation of the emperors and given to the people. The house had all the appearance of a burgher's dwelling, neat and comfortable, painted simply green, and without any mark of pretension: it stood close to the corner of the narrow “Juden-gasse,” just at the limit of the dirty quarter of the Jews—it was Rothschild's house.

I looked in at the open door. The staircase was brightly illuminated: there stood the livery servants, with wax lights in massy silver candlesticks, bowing low before an aged woman, who was carried down the stairs in a sedan chair. The master of the house stood by, with uncovered head, and imprinted a respectful kiss on the old lady's hand. It was his mother: she nodded to him affectionately, and then made a sign to the servants, who escorted her through the dark and narrow street to one of the meanest houses in this ill-reputed quarter of the town. Here she lived; here she had borne her children; from this spot had sprung and unfolded the magic flower of their fortunes. Were she now to leave the despised street and the crazy old house, who knows but that fortune might abandon them? This was her belief.

The Moon related no more: her visit to me was all too short this evening. But I thought on the old lady in the narrow street. A single word from her, and she had her magnificent palace on the bank of the Thames—one word from her, and there lay her villa on the Bay of Naples. “Were I to forsake the old house from which the fortunes of my sons have sprung, fortune might perchance forsake them!”

It may be a superstitious feeling; but it is a superstition of such a nature, that, to those who know the story and have the picture presented to them, one word of superscription will convey its full comprehension—*a Mother.*

TWENTY-FIFTH EVENING

In the morning twilight of yesterday, said the Moon, I gazed on the chimneys of a large city, from which as yet no smoke arose. A little head popped up suddenly from one of them, and presently after half the body followed, whilst both arms rested upon the edge of the chimney. Hurra! It was a little sweep, who for the first time in his life had climbed to the very top of a chimney, and now popped out his head. "Hurra!" This was indeed something different from creeping about in the narrow flues and the little chimneys. The air was so fresh; he could look forth over the whole city, and to the green fields and woods beyond. The sun was just rising; round and large it shone into his face, which beamed with joy, although prettily begrimed with soot. "The whole city can see me now!" he cried. "And the moon can see me, and the sun too. Hurra!" And again he waved his brush above his head.

TWENTY-SIXTH EVENING

Last night, said the Moon, I looked down upon a city in China; my beams shone upon the long, naked walls which form the streets. Here and there indeed was a door, but it remained always shut; for what has the Chinese to do with the world without? Close blinds concealed the windows behind the street wall; and from the Temple alone a light shone faintly. I looked in, and surveyed leisurely the gorgeous sanctuary. From the floor to the ceiling the walls are painted with all kinds of ridiculous figures, in bright colors and richly gilt, mostly representing the actions of the gods upon earth; whilst in every niche stands the statue of a deity, almost wholly concealed behind gaudy drapery and banners. Before each one of the gods (which are all of tin) is placed a little altar, with holy water, flowers, and burning wax lights.

First in the temple stood Fu, the principal deity, arrayed in a silken robe of the sacred yellow color. At the foot of the altar sat a living form, a young priest, who seemed to be engaged in prayer; but in the midst of his devotions he apparently fell into a deep reverie, a sweet, pensive melancholy: surely he had some sinful thought, for his cheeks burned, and his head was bowed toward the ground. Poor Soui-houng! could it be that he was dreaming of his favorite little flower bed, such as separates every Chinese house from the long street wall? and was the garden work in the open air so much pleasanter than sweeping the temple and snuffing the wax tapers? or was he longing to be seated at the richly spread table, and wiping his mouth with silver paper between the courses? or was his sin so great, that, should he dare to confess it, the

Celestial Empire must mercilessly punish him with death? or were his thoughts so bold as to follow the ships of the barbarians to their home—far distant England? No, his thoughts wandered not so far, and yet they were as sinful as the warm passions of youth could make them; doubly sinful here in the temple, in the presence of the statues of Fu and the other holy deities. I know where his thoughts rested. At the further end of the city, upon the flat and flagged roof, where beautiful vases with large white bellflowers stood ranged behind the porcelain-covered balustrade, sat the lovely Pe, with her roguishly pinched-in eyes, full lips, and the smallest foot in the world. The shoe pressed her foot, but at her heart there was a greater pressure still; and she raised her beautiful arms, rounded as if by the turner's lathe, and the satin rustled as she moved them. Before her stood a glass globe, in which were swimming four goldfish. She stirred the water with a little parti-colored rod, varnished and shining—so gently, so slowly! for she was lost in thought. Was she thinking how brilliantly the goldfish were clothed, how securely they lived in the glass globe, and how plentifully they were supplied with food—and, notwithstanding, how many thousand times happier they would be at liberty? Her thoughts strayed far from her father's house to the temple, but not with reverence for the gods. Poor Pe! poor Soui-houng! their earthly thoughts met, but my cold beam lay between them like a cherub's sword.

TWENTY-SEVENTH EVENING

Perfect stillness brooded upon the ocean, said the Moon. The water was as transparent as the pure air through which I sailed, and deep beneath the surface of the waves I could discern the strange plants which, like giant trees of the forest, stretched upward their long stalks, while the fish sported above their tops.

High aloft in the air a flock of wild swans were winging their flight toward the south. One of them sank exhausted down, down upon its wearied wing, whilst its eye followed longing the aerial caravan as it receded in the distance. It kept its wings expanded wide, and sank gently, until at length it touched the surface of the waters. Its head inclined backwards, enfolded in its wings, and there it lay motionless, like the white lotus flower upon the peaceful lake.

Gradually the breeze sprang up, and fanned the surface of the water, which rippled, sparkling brilliantly, until by degrees it curled up in large and crested waves. And anew the swan raised up its head, while in fine spray the water plashed over its breast and back. The breaking day tinged the clouds with purple: with new vigor the swan shook its plumage, and mounted upward with quick strokes of its wings. It flew

to meet the rising sun, in the direction of the coast, which blended with the blue horizon: thither the aerial caravan had gone before; but the swan held on its course alone, with longing in its breast: onward it flew, but alone, over the blue and swelling deep.

TWENTY-EIGHTH EVENING

I will give you another sketch from Sweden, said the Moon. In the midst of a dark pine forest, close to the gloomy bank of the Roxe, lies the old convent church of Wreta. My beams glided through the grating in the wall, into the spacious vault, where monarchs sleep in large stone coffins. Upon the moldering wall above glitters a kingly crown, the symbol of earthly glory: but it is of wood, painted and gilded, and hung upon a wooden peg. The worm has eaten through the wood, and the spider has spun her web from the crown to the coffin, like a mourning veil, heavy with grief, and yet so passing light and frail, as sorrow itself is not unwont to be.

How peacefully they slumber—the once mighty monarchs of this changeful world! I can still see the proud smile around the lips, upon whose mandate hung the issues of joy or of grief.

As the steamboat, like a magic bark, winds its course among the mountains, the stranger oft makes a pilgrimage to the lonely church in the forest. He gazes with amazement on this ghastly sepulchral vault, and inquires the names of the kings; but they fall on his ear as an empty and forgotten sound. He looks with a smile at the worm-eaten crowns; and if perchance he is of a pious spirit, a feeling of sadness is reflected in his smile. Slumber on, ye dead! the Moon still holds you in fresh remembrance, and by night she sends her cold ray into the gloomy chamber of your silent realm.

TWENTY-NINTH EVENING

By the roadside stands an inn, said the Moon, where the wagoner stops to bait his horses, and opposite to it is a large cart shed. The thatched roof is in parts worn away by time, and I looked down through the openings between the rafters into the cheerless shed. The turkey cock sat asleep upon a perch under the trap door of the hayloft, and the saddle lay in the empty manger.

In the middle of the shed stood an old-fashioned, shut-up traveling carriage; the gentlefolks inside were taking their nap in easy security, whilst the horses were baited, and the coachman indulged in stretching his legs, albeit (as I know full well) he had already enjoyed a comfortable doze for more than half the journey. The door of the hostler's

chamber stood open; the bed looked as if turned topsy-turvy, and a tallow candle, carelessly placed on the boards, was burning in the socket of a dirty iron-wire candlestick. The wind blew cold through the rafters of the shed, and the dawn was coming on. In one of the side stalls a family of poor itinerant musicians had lain down to rest for the night upon the broken pavement, over which a little straw was shaken down. The father and mother were probably dreaming of the burning contents of the glass; but the pale little girl dreamed of the burning tears in her eye. At their head lay a harp, at their feet the dog.

THIRTIETH EVENING

I will tell you a circumstance which occurred a year ago, said the Moon, in a country town in the south of Germany. The master of a dancing bear was sitting in the taproom of an inn, eating his supper; whilst the bear, poor harmless beast! was tied up behind the wood-stack in the yard.

In the room upstairs three little children were playing about. Tramp, tramp! was suddenly heard on the stairs: who could it be? The door flew open, and enter—the bear, the huge, shaggy beast with its clanking chain! Tired of standing so long in the yard alone, Bruin had at length found his way to the staircase. At first the little children were in a terrible fright at this unexpected visit, and each ran into a corner to hide himself. But the bear found them all out, put his muzzle, snuffling, up to them, but did not harm them in the least. He must be a big dog, thought the children; and they began to stroke him familiarly. The bear stretched himself out at his full length upon the floor, and the youngest boy rolled over him, and nestled his curly head in the shaggy, black fur of the beast. Then the eldest boy went and fetched his drum, and thumped away on it with might and main; whereupon the bear stood erect upon his hind legs, and began to dance. What glorious fun! Each boy shouldered his musket; the bear must of course have one too, and he held it tight and firm, like any soldier. There's a comrade for you, my lads! and away they marched—one, two—one, two!

The door suddenly opened, and the children's mother entered. You should have seen her—speechless with terror, her cheeks white as a sheet, and her eyes fixed with horror. But the youngest boy nodded with a look of intense delight and cried, "Mamma, we are only playing at soldiers!" At that moment the master of the bear appeared.

FIVE OUT OF ONE SHELL

THERE WERE five peas in one shell: they were green, and the pod was green, and so they thought all the world was green; and that was just as it should be! The shell grew, and the peas grew; they accommodated themselves to circumstances, sitting all in a row. The sun shone without, and warmed the husk, and the rain made it clear and transparent; it was mild and agreeable in the bright day and in the dark night, just as it should be, and the peas as they sat there became bigger and bigger, and more and more thoughtful, for something they must do.

"Are we to sit here everlastingly?" asked one. "I'm afraid we shall become hard by long sitting. It seems to me there must be something outside: I have a kind of inkling of it."

And weeks went by. The peas became yellow, and the pod also.

"All the world's turning yellow," said they; and they had a right to say it.

Suddenly they felt a tug at the shell. The shell was torn off, passed through human hands, and glided down into the pocket of a jacket, in company with other full pods.

"Now we shall soon be opened!" they said; and that is just what they were waiting for.

"I should like to know who of us will get farthest!" said the smallest of the five. "Yes, now it will soon show itself."

"What is to be will be," said the biggest.

"Crack!" the pod burst, and all the five peas rolled out into the bright sunshine. There they lay in a child's hand. A little boy was clutching them, and said they were fine peas for his pea-shooter; and he put one in directly and shot it out.

"Now I'm flying out into the wide world, catch me if you can!" And he was gone.

"I," said the second, "I shall fly straight into the sun. That's a shell worth looking at, and one that exactly suits me." And away he went.

"We'll go to sleep wherever we arrive," said the two next, "but we shall roll on all the same." And they certainly rolled and tumbled down on the ground before they got into the pea-shooter; but they were put in for all that. "We shall go farthest," said they.

"What is to happen will happen," said the last, as he was shot forth out of the pea-shooter; and he flew up against the old board under the garret window, just into a crack which was filled up with moss and soft

mold; and the moss closed round him; there he lay a prisoner indeed, but not forgotten by provident Nature.

"What is to happen will happen," said he.

Within, in the little garret, lived a poor woman who went out in the day to clean stoves, chop wood small, and to do other hard work of the same kind, for she was strong and industrious too. But she always remained poor; and at home in the garret lay her half-grown only daughter, who was very delicate and weak; for a whole year she had kept her bed, and it seemed as if she could neither live nor die.

"She is going to her little sister," the woman said. "I had only the two children, and it was not an easy thing to provide for both, but the good God provided for one of them by taking her home to Himself; now I should be glad to keep the other that was left me; but I suppose they are not to remain separated, and my sick girl will go to her sister in heaven."

But the sick girl remained where she was. She lay quiet and patient all day long while her mother went to earn money out of doors. It was spring, and early in the morning, just as the mother was about to go out to work, the sun shone mildly and pleasantly through the little window, and threw its rays across the floor; and the sick girl fixed her eyes on the lowest pane in the window.

"What may that green thing be that looks in at the window? It is moving in the wind."

And the mother stepped to the window, and half opened it. "O!" said she, "on my word, that is a little pea which has taken root here, and is putting out its little leaves. How can it have got here into the crack? That is a little garden with which you can amuse yourself."

And the sick girl's bed was moved nearer to the window, so that she could always see the growing pea; and the mother went forth to her work.

"Mother, I think I shall get well," said the sick child in the evening. "The sun shone in upon me today delightfully warm. The little pea is prospering famously, and I shall prosper too, and get up, and go out into the warm sunshine."

"God grant it!" said the mother, but she did not believe it would be so; but she took care to prop with a little stick the green plant which had given her daughter the pleasant thoughts of life, so that it might not be broken by the wind; she tied a piece of string to the window sill and to the upper part of the frame, so that the pea might have something round which it could twine, when it shot up: and it did shoot up indeed—one could see how it grew every day.

"Really, here is a flower coming!" said the woman one day; and now

she began to cherish the hope that her sick daughter would recover. She remembered that lately the child had spoken much more cheerfully than before, that in the last few days she had risen up in bed of her own accord, and had sat upright, looking with delighted eyes at the little garden in which only one plant grew. A week afterward the invalid for the first time sat up for a whole hour. Quite happy, she sat there in the warm sunshine; the window was opened, and outside before it stood a pink pea blossom, fully blown. The sick girl bent down and gently kissed the delicate leaves. This day was like a festival.

"The Heavenly Father Himself has planted that pea, and caused it to prosper, to be a joy to you, and to me also, my blessed child!" said the glad mother; and she smiled at the flower, as if it had been a good angel.

But about the other peas? Why, the one who flew out into the wide world and said, "Catch me if you can," fell into the gutter on the roof, and found a home in a pigeon's craw; the two lazy ones got just as far, for they, too, were eaten up by pigeons, and thus, at any rate, they were of some real use; but the fourth, who wanted to go up into the sun, fell into the sink, and lay there in the dirty water for weeks and weeks, and swelled prodigiously.

"How beautifully fat I'm growing!" said the Pea. "I shall burst at last; and I don't think any pea can do more than that. I'm the most remarkable of all the five that were in the shell."

And the Sink said he was right.

But the young girl at the garret window stood there with gleaming eyes, with the roseate hue of health on her cheeks, and folded her thin hands over the pea blossom, and thanked Heaven for it.

"I," said the Sink, "stand up for my own pea."

CHARMING

ALFRED the sculptor—you know him? We all know him: he won the great gold medal, and got a traveling scholarship, went to Italy, and then came back to his native land. He was young in those days, and indeed he is young yet, though he is ten years older than he was then.

After his return he visited one of the little provincial towns on the island of Seeland. The whole town knew who the stranger was, and one of the richest persons gave a party in honor of him, and all who were of any consequence, or possessed any property, were invited. It was

quite an event, and all the town knew of it without its being announced by beat of drum. Apprentice boys, and children of poor people, and even some of the poor people themselves, stood in front of the house, and looked at the lighted curtain; and the watchman could fancy that *he* was giving a party, so many people were in the streets. There was quite an air of festivity about, and in the house was festivity also, for Mr. Alfred the sculptor was there.

He talked, and told anecdotes, and all listened to him with pleasure and a certain kind of awe; but none felt such respect for him as did the elderly widow of an official: she seemed, so far as Mr. Alfred was concerned, like a fresh piece of blotting paper, that absorbed all that was spoken, and asked for more. She was very appreciative and incredibly ignorant—a kind of female Caspar Hauser.

"I should like to see Rome," she said. "It must be a lovely city, with all the strangers who are continually arriving there. Now, do give us a description of Rome. How does the city look when you come in by the gate?"

"I cannot very well describe it," replied the sculptor. "A great open place, and in the midst of it an obelisk, which is a thousand years old."

"An organist!" exclaimed the lady, who had never met with the word *obelisk*.

A few of the guests could hardly keep from laughing, nor could the sculptor quite keep his countenance; but the smile that rose to his lips faded away, for he saw, close by the inquisitive dame, a pair of dark-blue eyes—they belonged to the daughter of the speaker, and any one who has such a daughter cannot be silly! The mother was like a fountain of questions, and the daughter, who listened but never spoke, might pass for the beautiful Naiad of the fountain. How charming she was! She was a study for the sculptor to contemplate, but not to converse with; and, indeed, she did not speak, or only very seldom.

"Has the Pope a large family?" asked the lady.

And the young man considerably answered, as if the question had been better put—

"No, he does not come of a great family."

"That's not what I mean," the widow persisted. "I mean, has he a wife and children?"

"The Pope is not allowed to marry," said the gentleman.

"I don't like that," was the lady's comment.

She certainly might have put more sensible questions; but if she had not spoken in just the manner she used, would her daughter have leaned so gracefully upon her shoulder, looking straight out with the almost mournful smile upon her face?

Then Mr. Alfred spoke again, and told of the glory of color in Italy,

of the purple hills, the blue Mediterranean, the azure sky of the South, whose brightness and glory was to be surpassed in the North by a maiden's deep blue eyes. And this he said with a peculiar application; but she who should have understood his meaning, looked as if she were quite unconscious of it, and that again was charming!

"Italy!" sighed a few of the guests.

"O, to travel!" sighed others.

"Charming! charming!" they all chorused.

"Yes, if I win a hundred thousand dollars in the lottery," said the head tax-collector's lady, "then we will travel. I and my daughter, and you, Mr. Alfred; you must be our guide. We'll all three travel together, and one or two good friends more." And she nodded in such a friendly way at the company, that each one might imagine he or she was the person who was to be taken to Italy. "Yes, we will go to Italy! but not to those parts where there are robbers—we'll keep to Rome, and to the great highroads where one is safe."

And the daughter sighed very quietly. And how much may lie in one little sigh, or be placed in it! The young man placed a great deal in it. The two blue eyes, lit up that evening in honor of him, must conceal treasures—treasures of the heart and mind—richer than all the glories of Rome; and when he left the party that night he had lost *his* heart—lost it completely, to the young lady.

The house of the head tax-collector's widow was now the one which Mr. Alfred the sculptor most assiduously frequented; and it was understood that his visits were not intended for that lady, though he and she were the people who kept up the conversation: he came for the daughter's sake. They called her Kala. Her name was really Calen Malena, and these two names had been contracted into the one name, Kala. She was beautiful; but a few said she was rather dull, and probably slept late of a morning.

"She has always been accustomed to that," her mother said. "She's a beauty, and they always are easily tired. She sleeps rather late, but that makes her eyes so clear."

What a power lay in the depths of those dark-blue eyes! "Still waters run deep." The young man felt the truth of this proverb, and his heart had sunk into the depths. He spoke and told his adventures, and the mamma was as simple and eager in her questioning as on the first evening of their meeting.

It was a pleasure to hear Alfred describe anything. He spoke of Naples, of excursions to Mount Vesuvius, and showed colored prints of several of the eruptions. And the head tax-collector's widow had never heard of them before, or taken time to consider the question.

"Good heavens!" she exclaimed. "So that is a burning mountain! But is it not dangerous to the people round about?"

"Whole cities have been destroyed," he answered; "for instance, Pompeii and Herculaneum."

"But the poor people! And you saw all that with your own eyes?"

"No, I did not see any of the eruptions represented in these pictures but I will show you a picture of my own of an eruption I saw."

He laid a pencil sketch upon the table, and mamma, who had been absorbed in the contemplation of the highly colored prints, threw a glance at the pale drawing, and cried in astonishment—

"Did you see it throw up white fire?"

For a moment Alfred's respect for Kala's mamma suffered a sudden diminution; but, dazzled by the light that illumined Kala, he soon found it quite natural that the old lady should have no eye for color. After all, it was of no consequence, for Kala's mamma had the best of all things, namely, Kala herself.

And Alfred and Kala were betrothed, which was natural enough, and the betrothal was announced in the little newspaper of the town. Mamma purchased thirty copies of the paper, that she might cut out the paragraph and send it to their friends and acquaintances. And the betrothed pair were happy, and the mother-in-law elect was happy too, for it seemed like connecting herself with Thorwaldsen.

"For you are a continuation of Thorwaldsen," she said to Alfred.

And it seemed to Alfred that mamma had in this instance said a clever thing. Kala said nothing; but her eyes shone, her lips smiled, her every movement was graceful: yes, she was beautiful; that cannot be too often repeated.

Alfred undertook to take a bust of Kala and of his mother-in-law. They sat to him accordingly, and saw how he molded and smoothed the soft clay with his fingers.

"I suppose it is only on our account," said mamma-in-law, "that you undertake this commonplace work, and don't leave your servant to do all that sticking together."

"It is necessary that I should mold the clay myself," he replied.

"Ah, yes, you are so very polite," retorted mamma; and Kala silently pressed his hand, still soiled by the clay.

And he unfolded to both of them the loveliness of nature in creation, pointing out how the living stood higher in the scale than the dead creature, how the plant was developed beyond the mineral, the animal beyond the plant, and man beyond the animal. He strove to show them how mind and beauty become manifest in outward form, and how it was the sculptor's task to seize that beauty and to manifest it in his works.

Kala stood silent, and nodded approbation of the expressed thought, while mamma-in-law made the following confession:

"It is difficult to follow all that. But I manage to hobble after you

with my thoughts, though they whirl round and round, but I contrive to hold them fast."

And Kala's beauty held Alfred fast, filled his whole soul, and seized and mastered him. Beauty gleamed forth from Kala's every feature—gleamed from her eyes, lurked in the corners of her mouth, and in every movement of her fingers. Alfred the sculptor saw this: he spoke only of her, thought only of her, and the two became one; and thus it may be said that she spoke much, for he and she were one, and he was always talking of her.

Such was the betrothal; and now came the wedding, with bridesmaids and wedding presents, all duly mentioned in the wedding speech.

Mamma-in-law had set up Thorwaldsen's bust at the end of the table, attired in a dressing gown, for he was to be a guest; such was her whim. Songs were sung and cheers were given, for it was a gay wedding, and they were a handsome pair. "Pygmalion received his Galatea," so one of the songs said.

"Ah, that's your mythologies," said mamma-in-law.

Next day the youthful pair started for Copenhagen, where they were to live. Mamma-in-law accompanied them, "to take care of the commonplace," as she said—meaning the domestic economy. Kala was like a doll in a doll's house, all was so bright, so new, and so fine. There they sat, all three; and as for Alfred, to use a proverb that will describe his position, we may say that he sat like the friar in the goose yard.

The magic of form had enchanted him. He had looked at the case, and cared not to inquire what the case contained, and that omission brings unhappiness, much unhappiness into married life; for the case may be broken and the 'gilt may come off, and then the purchaser may repent his bargain. In a large party it is very disagreeable to observe that one's buttons are giving way, and that there are no buckles to fall back upon; but it is worse still in a great company to become aware that wife and mother-in-law are talking nonsense, and that one cannot depend upon oneself for a happy piece of wit to carry off the stupidity of the thing.

The young married pair often sat hand in hand, he speaking and she letting fall a word here and there—the same melody, the same clear, bell-like sounds. It was a mental relief when Sophy, one of her friends, came to pay a visit.

Sophy was not pretty. She was certainly free from bodily deformity, though Kala always asserted she was a little crooked; but no eye save a friend's would have remarked it. She was a very sensible girl, and it never occurred to her that she might become at all dangerous here. Her appearance was like a pleasant breath of air in the doll's house;

and air was certainly required there, as they all acknowledged. They felt they wanted airing, and consequently they came out into the air, and mamma-in-law and the young couple traveled to Italy.

"Thank Heaven that we are in our own four walls again!" was the exclamation of mother and daughter when they came home a year after.

"There's no pleasure in traveling," said mamma-in-law. "To tell the truth, it's very wearisome—I beg pardon for saying so. I found the time hang heavy, although I had my children with me; and it's expensive work, traveling—very expensive! And all those galleries one has to see, and the quantity of things you are obliged to run after! You must do it for decency's sake, for you're sure to be asked when you come back; and then you're sure to be told that you've omitted to see what was best worth seeing. I got tired at last of those endless Madonnas: one seemed to be turning a Madonna oneself!"

"And what bad living you get!" said Kala.

"Yes," replied mamma, "no such thing as an honest meat soup. It's miserable trash, their cookery."

And the traveling fatigued Kala: she was always fatigued, that was the worst of it. Sophy was taken into the house, where her presence was a real advantage.

Mamma-in-law acknowledged that Sophy understood both housewifery and art, though a knowledge of the latter could not be expected from a person of her limited means; and she was, moreover, an honest, faithful girl: she showed that thoroughly while Kala lay sick—fading away.

Where the case is everything, the case should be strong, or else all is over. And all *was* over with the case—Kala died.

"She was beautiful," said mamma; "she was quite different from the antiques, for they are so damaged. A beauty ought to be perfect, and Kala was a perfect beauty."

Alfred wept, and mamma wept, and both of them wore mourning. The black dress suited mamma very well, and she wore mourning the longest. Moreover, she had soon to experience another grief in seeing Alfred marry again—marry Sophy, who had no appearance at all.

"He's gone to the very extreme," cried mamma-in-law; "he has gone from the most beautiful to the ugliest, and has forgotten his first wife. Men have no endurance. My husband was of a different stamp, and he died before me."

"Pygmalion received his Galatea," said Alfred: "yes, that's what they said in the wedding song. I had once really fallen in love with the beautiful statue, which awoke to life in my arms; but the kindred soul

which Heaven sends down to us, the angel who can feel and sympathize with and elevate us, I have not found and won till now. You came, Sophy, not in the glory of outward beauty, though you are fair—fairer than is needful. The chief thing remains the chief. You came to teach the sculptor that his work is but clay and dust, only an outward form in a fabric that passes away, and that we must seek the essence, the internal spirit. Poor Kala! ours was but wayfarers' life. Yonder, where we shall know each other by sympathy, we shall be half strangers."

"That was not lovingly spoken," said Sophy—"not spoken like a true Christian. Yonder, where there is no giving in marriage, but where, as you say, souls attract each other by sympathy; there where everything beautiful develops itself and is elevated, her soul may acquire such completeness that it may sound more harmoniously than mine; and you will then once more utter the first rapturous exclamation of your love, 'Beautiful—most beautiful!'"

PEITER, PETER, AND PEER

WHAT children know nowadays is past belief: it is hard to say what they do not know. That the stork came and fetched them out of the well or the milldam, when they were tiny little things, and brought them to father and mother, is such an old story now that they no longer believe it, and yet it is the real truth.

But how comes it that the little ones are down in the milldam or the well? Ah! not every one knows that, but there are some few who do know it. Have you ever looked well at the sky, on a clear, starlight night, and watched the many shooting stars? It is as if they were stars that fell from the sky and disappeared in the darkness. Even the most learned cannot explain what they do not know themselves; nevertheless, when one knows it, one can explain it. It is like a little candle from a Christmas tree, that drops from the deep blue sky, and is blown out by the evening wind. It is a soul spark from our Lord, that flies down toward the earth, and when it comes into our thick, heavy air, loses its brilliancy, and there only remains of it something that our eyes cannot see—for it is something much finer and more delicate than our air—a little child from heaven; a little angel, but without wings, for it has to become a human child, and then what would it do with wings, if it had them?

Softly it glides through the air, and the wind wafts it into a flower—a dandelion maybe, or a rose, or cowslip—and there it lies and waits. It is

so light and airy that a fly could carry it off, and a bee could do that very easily; but when these come to hunt for their sweetness in the flower, and find the little air-child lying there in the way, they do not whisk it out. O no! they would never do that; they take it and carry it to a water-lily leaf, where they lay it down in the warm sunshine, and from the leaf the air-child creeps and scrambles into the water, where it remains, sleeping and growing till it is big enough for the stork to see it; and then he picks it up and carries it to some kind family where they very much wish for such a sweet little one. But how sweet or not it becomes, that depends on whether the little one has drunk pure, clear water, or whether it has swallowed mud and duckweed the wrong way: that makes one so earthy!

The stork never chooses, but takes the first one he happens to see. One comes into a pleasant house to kind and loving parents; another comes to poor people in great sorrow and misery: it would have been much better to remain in the milldam!

The little ones never can remember afterward what they dreamed while they lay in the water, under the water-lily leaf, where, when evening came they heard the frogs sing "Co-ax, co-ax, gwax"; and that means, in human language, "Make haste to go to sleep and dream." Nor can they remember in what flower they lay at first, nor how it smelled; and yet there is always something within them, when they are grown men and women which makes them feel, "This flower I like best"; that is because it is the one they were laid in by the wind, when they were air-children.

The stork lives to a good old age, and always takes an interest in the little ones whom he has brought out into the world, and takes note of how they get on, and if they behave well. To be sure, he cannot do much for them, or in any way change anything in their lives, for he has his own large family to attend to, but at least he never lets them quite out of his thoughts.

I know an old and very worthy, honest Stork, who has had much experience, and has fetched many little ones out of the water, and knows their histories—in which there always is to be found a little mud and duckweed from the milldam. I begged him to tell me the history of one of them and he said I should have three instead of one, out of the Peitersens' house.

That was a remarkably nice family, the Peitersens; the father was a member of the common council, and that was a great distinction. To this home the stork brought a little fellow who was called Peiter; and the year after he brought another, and him they called Peter; and when the third one came he got the name of Peer; because the names of Peiter, Peter, Peer, are all contained in that of Peitersen. Here then

were three brothers—three shooting stars—each rocked in a flower, then laid under the water-lily leaf in the milldam, and fetched from there by the Stork and brought to the Peitersen family, who live in the corner house that you have so often seen.

They grew in body and in mind, and wanted to be something more than common councilmen. Peiter said he wanted to be a robber; he had seen the play of "Fra Diavolo," and after that decided upon the robber business, as the most delightful in the world.

Peter said he would be a soap-fat man, and carry a rattle that makes a dreadful noise—such a one as he had heard that soap-fat men in other countries have; and Peer, who was such a good, sweet boy, round and plump, but who used to bite his nails—that was his only fault—Peer wanted to be "Papa." And this was what each said he wanted to be in the world, when people asked them about it.

And then they were sent to school, and the one was first and the other last of his class, and one came just in between; but for all that they might be just as good and as clever, the one as the other—and so they were—at least so said their fond and very clear-sighted parents.

They went to children's parties, and they smoked cigars when nobody was looking, and they made great progress in knowledge and insight.

Peiter, from the time he was quite small, was quarrelsome and fierce, just as a robber ought to be; he was a very naughty boy, but that came, his mother said, from worms—naughty children always have something the matter with them—that is mud in the stomach—from the milldam. But one day his mother's new silk gown was the worse for his obstinacy and naughtiness.

"Don't push the tea-table, my sweet lamb," said his mother. "You might upset the cream pitcher, and then I should get spots on my silk gown"; and the "sweet lamb," with a firm hand, took the cream pitcher, and with a firm hand poured all the cream into mamma's lap—and mamma could not help saying "O lamb, lamb, that was careless of you, lamb!" But he had a will of his own—that she could not deny—and a strong will shows character, and that is so pleasant for a mother to see.

He might undoubtedly have become a robber, but he didn't after all; he only came to look like one—wore a slouched hat, bare throat, and long, lank hair; he was to have been an artist, but only got as far as the clothes, and looked like a hollyhock, and all the people he drew looked like hollyhocks—they were so lanky. He was very fond of that flower, and the stork said he had lain in it when he was an air-child.

Peter must have lain in a buttercup: he looked so buttery around the corners of his mouth, and had such a yellow skin, that one could not but fancy that if he were cut in the skin, butter would come out. He

ought to have been a butter-dealer, and might have been his own sign; but the inner man, in him, was a soap-fat man with a rattle. He was the musical member of the Peitersen family—"musical enough for all of them," said the neighbors. He composed seventeen new polkas in one week, and then put them all together and made an opera of them, with accompaniment of drum and rattle. Ugh! how fine that was!

Peer was small, red, and white, and quite ordinary, he had lain in a daisy. He never defended himself when the other boys tried to fight him: he said he was the most reasonable, and the most reasonable always gives way.

He made collections; first of slate pencils, and after that of the seals of letters; and then he got a little cabinet of Natural History curiosities, in which was the skeleton of a stickleback, three blind young rats in alcohol, and a stuffed mole. Peer had great taste for science and an eye for the beauties of nature—and that was very satisfactory for his parents, and for Peer too.

His brothers were both engaged to be married, while he still thought of nothing but completing his collection of waterfowl's eggs. He knew a great deal more about animals than about human beings; he even thought that we never could be as great as the animals in the feeling which we consider as the highest of all, and that is—love. He saw that when Mrs. Nightingale was on her nest, setting, Mr. Nightingale sat on a branch close by and sang all night to his little wife, "Kluck-kluck-zi-zi-lo-lo-li!" Peer felt that he never could do that, and that it would be impossible for him to sacrifice his night's rest in that way. When Madame Stork had the baby storks in the nest, Mr. Stork stood all night on one leg on the edge of the roof, to watch. Peer could not have stood so for an hour!

And when one day he closely inspected a spider's web, and saw what it contained, he utterly renounced all ideas of marriage. Mr. Spider weaves his web that he may catch thoughtless flies, no matter if old or young, fat or lean; he only lives for the support of his family. But Mrs. Spider lives only for him. She eats him up out of sheer love; she eats his heart, his head, his stomach, and nothing but his long, thin legs remain in the web, in the place where he sat with his heart full of anxiety for the welfare of his family. And this is the real, pure truth—right straight out of the Natural History book. Peer saw all this and grew thoughtful: to be so dearly loved by one's wife, that she eats one up out of love! No, that is too much—no human being could do as much as that, and would it be desirable?

And then Peer resolved never to marry, never to give nor to take a kiss; that might look like the first step toward marriage. But he got a kiss, notwithstanding—the same that we must all get some day—the

great kiss that Death gives. When we have lived long enough, then Death is ordered to "kiss him away," and away we go; there comes a ray of sunshine, straight from our Lord, so bright and dazzling as almost to blind us, and then the soul which came from heaven as a shooting star, goes back like a shooting star, but not to sleep in a flower, or to dream under the leaf of the water lily. O, no! it has much more important things to do; it goes into the great land of eternity and there it stays, but what that land is like, no one can say and no one knows. No one has peeped into it, not even the Stork, although he knows and has seen more than almost any one else. But he knew nothing more of Peer after he had gone to that strange land than what I have told you, though about Peiter and Peter he said he could tell much more; but I thought I had heard enough of them, and I suppose you have too, and so I thanked him and bade him good-bye for this once. But now he wants payment for this commonplace little story—three frogs and a little snake—he takes his pay in creature comforts, you see. Will you pay him? I will not: I have neither frogs nor snakes.

THE ICE MAIDEN

LITTLE RUDY

LET US PAY a visit to Switzerland. Let us look around us in that magnificent mountainous country, where the woods creep up the sides of the precipitous walls of rock; let us ascend to the dazzling snowfields above, and descend again to the green valleys beneath, where the rivers and the brooks foam along as if they were afraid that they should not fast enough reach the ocean and be lost in its immensity. The sun's burning rays shine on the deep dales, and they also shine upon the heavy masses of snow above, so that the ice blocks which have been accumulating for years melt and become rolling avalanches, piled-up glaciers. Two such lie in the broad mountain clefts under Schreckhorn and Wetterhorn, near the little mountain town of Grindelwald. They are wonderful to behold, and therefore in summertime many strangers come here from every foreign land. They come over the lofty snow-covered hills; they come through the deep valleys, and from thence for hours and hours they must mount; and always, as they ascend, the valleys seem to become deeper and deeper, until they appear as if viewed from a balloon high up in the air. The clouds often hang like thick heavy curtains of smoke around the lofty mountain peaks, while down in the valley, where the many brown wooden houses lie scattered about, a bright ray of the sun may be shining, and bringing into strong relief some

brilliant patch of green, making it look as if it were transparent. The waters foam and roar as they rush along below—they murmur and tinkle above. They look, up there, like silver ribbons streaming down over the rocks.

On both sides of the ascending road lie wooden houses. Each house has its little potato garden, and this is a necessity; for within doors yonder are many mouths—the houses are crammed with children—and children often waste their food. From all the cottages they sally forth in swarms, and throng round travelers, whether these are on foot or in carriages. The whole troop of children are little merchants—they offer for sale charming toy wooden houses, models of the dwellings one sees here among the mountains. Whether it be fair weather or foul, the crowds of children issue forth with their wares.

Some twenty years ago occasionally stood here, but always at a short distance from the other children, a little boy who was also ready to engage in trade. He stood with an earnest, grave expression of countenance, and holding his deal box fast with both his hands, as if he were afraid of losing it. The very earnestness of his face, and his being such a little fellow, caused him to be remarked and called forward, so that he often sold the most—he did not himself know why. Higher up among the hills lived his maternal grandfather, who cut out the neat, pretty houses, and in a room up yonder was an old press full of all sorts of things—nutcrackers, knives, forks, boxes with prettily carved leafwork, and springing chamois: there was everything to please a child's eye. But the little Rudy, as he was called, looked with greater interest and longing at the old firearms and other weapons which were hung up under the beams of the roof. "He should have them some day," said his grandfather, "when he was big enough and strong enough to make use of them." Young as the boy was, he was set to take care of the goats; and he who had to clamber after them was obliged to keep a good lookout and to be a good climber. And Rudy was an excellent climber; he even went higher than the goats, for he was fond of seeking for birds' nests up among the tops of the trees. Bold and adventurous he was, but no one ever saw him smile, except when he stood near the roaring cataract or heard the thunder of a rolling avalanche. He never played with the other children—he never went near them, except when his grandfather sent him down to sell the things he made. And Rudy did not care much for that; he preferred scrambling about among the mountains, or sitting at home with his grandfather, and hearing him tell stories of olden days, and of the people near by at Meyr agen, from whence he came. "This tribe had not been settled there from the earliest ages of the world," he said; "they were wanderers from afar—they had come from the distant North, where their race still dwelt, and were

called 'Swedes.' " This was a great deal for Rudy to learn, but he learned more from other sources, and these were the animals domiciled in the house. One was a large dog, Ajola, a legacy from Rudy's father—the other a tom-cat. Rudy had much for which to thank the latter—he had taught him to climb.

"Come out upon the roof with me!" the Cat had said, distinctly and intelligibly; for when one is a young child, and can scarcely speak, howls and ducks, cats and dogs, are almost as easily understood as the language that fathers and mothers use. One must be very little indeed then, however; it is the time when grandpapa's stick neighs, and becomes a horse with head, legs, and tail.

Some children retain these infantine thoughts longer than others; and of these it is said that they are very backward, exceedingly stupid children—people say so much!

"Come out upon the roof with me, little Rudy!" was one of the first things the Cat said, and Rudy understood him.

"It is all nonsense to fancy one must fall down; you won't fall unless you are afraid. Come! set one of your paws here, the other there, and take care of yourself with the rest of your paws! Keep a sharp lookout, and be active in your limbs! If there be a hole, spring over it, and keep a firm footing as I do."

And so also did little Rudy; often and often he sat on the shelving roof of the house with the cat, often too on the tops of the trees; but he sat also higher up among the towering rocks, which the cat did not frequent.

"Higher! higher!" said the trees and the bushes. "Do you not see how we climb up—to what height we go, and how fast we hold on, even among the narrowest points of rock?"

And Rudy gained the top of the hill earlier than the sun had gained it; and there he took his morning draught, the fresh invigorating mountain air—that drink which only Our Lord can prepare, and which mankind pronounces to be the early fragrance from the mountain herbs and the wild thyme and mint in the valley. All that is heavy the overhanging clouds absorb within themselves, and the winds carry them over the pine woods, while the spirit of fragrance becomes air—light and fresh; and this was Rudy's morning draught.

The sunbeams—those daughters of the sun, who bring blessings with them—kissed his cheeks; and Dizziness stood near on the watch, but dared not approach him; and the swallows from his grandfather's house beneath (there were not less than seven nests) flew up to him and the goats, singing, "We and you, and you and we!" They brought him greetings from his home, even from the two hens, the only birds in the establishment, though Rudy was not intimate with them.

Young as he was, he had traveled, and traveled a good deal for such a little fellow. He was born in the Canton of Valais, and brought from thence over the hills. He had visited on foot Staubbach, that seems like a silver veil to flutter before the snow-clad, glittering white mountain Jungfrau. And he had been at the great glaciers near Grindelwald, but that was connected with a sad event; his mother had found her death there, and there, his grandfather used to say, "little Rudy had got all his childish merriment knocked out of him." Before the child was a year old, "he laughed more than he cried," his mother had written; but from the time that he fell into the crevasse in the ice, his disposition had entirely changed. The grandfather did not say much about this in general, but the whole hill knew the fact.

Rudy's father had been a postilion, and the large dog who now shared Rudy's home had always accompanied him in his journeys over the Simplon down to the Lake of Geneva. Rudy's kindred on his father's side lived in the valley of the Rhone, in the Canton Valais; his uncle was a celebrated chamois hunter, and a well-known Alpine guide. Rudy was not more than a year old when he lost his father; and his mother was anxious to return with her child to her own family in the Bernese Oberland. Her father dwelt at the distance of a few hours' journey from Grindelwald; he was a carver in wood, and he made so much by this that he was very well off.

Carrying her infant in her arms, she set out homeward in the month of June, in company with two chamois hunters, over the Gemmi to reach Grindelwald. They had accomplished the greater portion of the journey, had crossed the highest ridges to the snowfields, and could already see her native valley with all its well-known scattered brown cottages; they had now only the labor of going over the upper part of one great glacier. The snow had recently fallen, and concealed a crevasse—not one so deep as to reach to the abyss below where the water foamed along, but deeper far than the height of any human being. The young woman who was carrying her infant slipped sank in, and suddenly disappeared; not a shriek, not a groan was heard—nothing but the crying of a little child. Upwards of an hour elapsed before her two companions were able to obtain from the nearest house ropes and poles to assist them in extricating her; and it was with much difficulty and labor that they brought up from the crevasse two dead bodies, as they thought. Every means of restoring animation was employed, and they were successful in recalling the child to life, but not the mother; and so the old grandfather received into his house, not a daughter, but a daughter's son—the little one "who laughed more than he cried." But a change seemed to have come over him since he had been in the glacier crevasses—in the cold underground ice world, where the souls of the

condemned are imprisoned until Doomsday, as the Swiss peasants assert.

Not unlike a rushing stream, frozen and pressed into blocks of green crystal, lies the glacier, one great mass of ice balanced upon another; in the depths beneath tears along the accumulating stream of melted ice and snow; deep hollows, immense crevasses, yawn within it. A wondrous palace of crystal it is, and in it dwells the Ice Maiden—the queen of the glaciers. She, the slayer, the crusher, is half the mighty ruler of the rivers, half a child of the air: therefore she is able to soar to the highest haunts of the chamois, to the loftiest peaks of the snow-covered hills, where the boldest mountaineer has to cut footsteps for himself in the ice; she sails on the slightest sprig of the pine tree over the raging torrents below, and bounds lightly from one mass of ice to another, with her long snow-white hair fluttering about her, and her bluish-green robe shining like the water in the deep Swiss lakes.

"To crush—to hold fast—such power is mine!" she cries; "yet a beautiful boy was snatched from me—a boy whom I had kissed, but not kissed to death. He is again among mankind; he tends the goats upon the mountain heights; he is always climbing higher and higher still, away, away from other human beings, but not from me! He is mine—I wait for him!"

And she commanded Vertigo to undertake the mission. It was in summertime; the Ice Maiden was melting in the green valley where the green mint grew, and Vertigo mounted and dived. Vertigo has several sisters, quite a flock of them, and the Ice Maiden selected the strongest among the many who exercise their power within doors and without—those who sit on the banisters of steep staircases and the outer rails of lofty towers, who bound like squirrels along the mountain ridges, and, springing thence, tread the air as the swimmer treads the water, and lure their victims onward, down to the abyss beneath.

Vertigo and the Ice Maiden both grasp after mankind, as the polypus grasps after all that comes within its reach. Vertigo was to seize Rudy.

"Seize him, indeed!" cried Vertigo; "I cannot do it! That good-for-nothing cat has taught him its art. Yon child of the human race possesses a power within himself which keeps me at a distance. I cannot reach the little urchin when he hangs from the branches out over the depths below, or I would willing'y loosen his hold, and send him whirling down through the air. But I cannot."

"We must seize him, though!" said the Ice Maiden, "either you or I! I will—I will!"

"No—no!" broke upon the air, like a mountain echo of the church bells' peal; but it was a whisper, it was a song, it was the liquid tones

of a chorus from other spirits of Nature—mild, soft, and loving, the daughters of the rays of the sun. They station themselves every evening in a circle upon the mountain peaks, and spread out their rose-tinted wings, which, as the sun sinks, become redder and redder, until the lofty Alps seem all in a blaze. Men call this the Alpine glow. When the sun has sunk, they retire within the white snow on the crests of the hills, and sleep there until sunrise, when they come forth again. Much do they love flowers, butterflies, and mankind; and among the latter they had taken a great fancy for little Rudy.

"You shall not imprison him—you shall not get him!" they sang.

"Greater and stronger have I seized and imprisoned," said the Ice Maiden.

Then sang the daughters of the sun of the wanderer whose hat the whirlwind tore from his head, and carried away in its stormy flight. The wind could take his cap, but not the man himself—no, it could make him tremble with its violence, but it could not sweep him away. "The human race is stronger and more ethereal even than we are; they alone may mount higher than even the sun, our parent. They know the magic words that can rule the wind and the waves so that they are compelled to obey and to serve them. You loosen the heavy oppressive weight, and they soar upward."

Thus sang the sweet tones of the bell-like chorus.

And every morning the sun's rays shone through the one little window in the grandfather's house upon the quiet child. The daughters of the rays of the sun kissed him—they wished to thaw, to obliterate the ice kiss that the queenly maiden of the glaciers had given him when, in his dead mother's lap, he lay in the deep crevasse of ice from which almost as by a miracle he had been rescued.

THE JOURNEY TO THE NEW HOME

Rudy was now eight years of age. His father's brother, who lived in the valley of the Rhone, on the other side of the mountain, wished to have the boy, as he could be better educated and taught to do for himself there; so also thought the grandfather, and he therefore agreed to part with him.

The time for Rudy's departure drew nigh. There were many more to take leave of than only his grandfather. First there was Ajola, the old dog.

"Your father was the postilion, and I was the postilion's dog," said Ajola. "We have often journeyed up and down, and I know both dogs and men on both sides of the mountains. It has not been my habit to speak much, but now that we shall have so short a time for conversation,

I will say a little more than usual, and will relate to you something upon which I have ruminated a great deal. I cannot understand it, nor can you; but that is of no consequence. But I have gathered this from it—that the good things of this world are not dealt out equally either to dogs or to mankind; all are not born to lie in laps or to drink milk. I have never been accustomed to such indulgences. But I have seen a whelp of a little dog traveling in the inside of a mail coach, occupying a man's or a woman's seat, and the lady to whom he belonged, or whom he governed, carried a bottle of milk, from which she helped him; she also offered him spongecakes, but he would not condescend to eat them; he only sniffed at them, so she ate them herself. I was running in the sun by the side of the carriage, as hungry as a dog could be, but I had only to chew the cud of bitter reflection. Things were not so justly meted out as they might have been—but when are they? May you come to drive in carriages, and lie in Fortune's lap, but you can't bring all this about yourself. I never could, either by barking or growling."

This was Ajola's discourse; and Rudy threw his arms round his neck and kissed him on his wet mouth; and then he caught up the Cat in his arms, but the animal was angry at this, and exclaimed, "You are getting too strong for me, but I will not use my claws against you. Scramble away over the mountains—I have taught you how to do so; never think of falling, but hold fast, have no fear, and you will be safe enough."

And the Cat sprang down and ran off, for he did not wish Rudy to see how sorry he was.

The hens hopped upon the floor, one of them had lost her tail, for a traveler, who chose to play the sportsman, had shot off her tail, mistaking the poor fowl for a bird of prey.

"Rudy is going over the hills," murmured one of the hens.

"He is in a hurry," said the other, "and I don't like leave-takings"; and they both hopped out.

The goats also bleated their farewells, and very sorry they were.

Just at that time there were two active guides about to cross the mountains; they proposed descending the other side of the Gemmi, and Rudy was to accompany them on foot. It was a long and laborious journey for such a little fellow, but he had a good deal of strength, and had courage that was indomitable.

The swallows flew a little way with him, and sang to him, "We and you, and you and we!"

The travelers' path led across the rushing Lüttschine, which in numerous small streams falls from the dark clefts of the Grindelwald glaciers. The trunks of fallen trees and fragments of rock serve here as bridges.

They had soon passed the thicket of alders, and commenced to ascend the mountain, close to where the glaciers had loosened themselves from the side of the hill; and they went upon the glacier over the blocks of ice, and round them.

Rudy crept here, and walked there; his eyes sparkling with joy, as he firmly placed his iron-tipped mountain shoe wherever he could find footing for it. The small patches of black earth, which the mountain torrents had cast upon the glacier, imparted to it a burned appearance, but still the bluish-green, glass-like ice shone out visibly. They had to go round the little pools which were dammed up, as it were, amidst detached masses of ice; and in this circuitous route they approached an immense stone, which lay rocking on the edge of a crevasse in the ice. The stone lost its equipoise, toppled over, and rolled down; and the echo of its thundering fall resounded faintly from the glacier's deep abyss, far—far beneath.

Upward, always upward, they journeyed on; the glacier itself stretched upward, like a continued stream of masses of ice piled up in wild confusion, amidst bare and rugged rocks. Rudy remembered for a moment what had been told him—that he, with his mother, had lain buried in one of these cold, mysterious fissures; but he soon threw off such gloomy thoughts, and only looked upon the tale as one among the many fables he had heard. Once or twice, when the men with whom he was traveling thought that it was rather difficult for so little a boy to mount up, they held out their hands to help him; but he never needed any assistance, and he stood upon the glacier as securely as if he had been a chamois itself.

Now they came upon rocky ground, sometimes amidst mossy stones, sometimes amidst low pine trees, and again out upon the green pastures—always changing, always new. Around them towered lofty snow-clad mountains, those of which every child in the neighborhood knows the names—Jungfrau, the Monk, and Eiger.

Rudy had never before been so far from his home—never before beheld the wide-spreading ocean of snow that lay with its immovable billows of ice, from which the wind occasionally swept little clouds of powdery snow, as it sweeps the scum from the waves of the sea. Glacier stretched close to glacier—one might have said they were hand in hand; and each is a crystal palace belonging to the Ice Maiden, whose pleasure and occupation it is to seize and imprison her victims.

The sun was shining warmly, and the snow dazzled the eyes as if it had been strewn with flashing pale-blue diamond sparks. Innumerable insects, especially butterflies and bees, lay dead in masses on the snow; they had winged their way too high, or else the wind had carried them upward to the regions, for them, of cold and death. Around Wetterhorn

hung what might be likened to a large tuft of very fine dark wool, a threatening cloud; it sank, bulging out with what it had concealed in itself—a *föhn*,* fearfully violent in its might when it should break loose.

The whole of this journey—the night quarters above—the wild track—the mountain clefts where the water, during an incalculably long period of time, had penetrated through the blocks of stone—made an indelible impression upon little Rudy's mind.

A forsaken stone building, beyond the sea of snow, gave the travelers shelter for the night. Here they found some charcoal and branches of pine trees. A fire was soon kindled, couches of some kind were arranged as well as they could be, and the men placed themselves near the blazing fire, took out their tobacco, and began to drink the warm spiced beverage they had prepared for themselves, nor did they forget to give some to Rudy.

The conversation fell upon the mysterious beings who haunt the Alpine land: upon the strange gigantic snakes in the deep lakes—the night folks—the specter host, that carry sleepers off through the air to the wonderful, almost floating city of Venice—the wild herdsman, who drives his black sheep over the green pastures; if these had not been seen, the sound of their bells had undoubtedly been heard, and the frightful noise made by the phantom herds.

Rudy listened with intense curiosity to these superstitious tales, but without any fear, for *that* he did not know; and while he listened, he fancied that he heard the uproar of the wild spectral herd. Yes! It became more and more distinct; the men heard it too. They were awed into silence; and as they hearkened to the unearthly noise, they whispered to Rudy that he must not sleep.

It was a *föhn* that had burst forth—that violent tempestuous wind which issues downward from the mountains into the valley beneath, and in its fury snaps large trees as if they were but reeds, and carries the wooden houses from one bank of a river to the other as we would move men on a chessboard.

After an hour had elapsed, Rudy was told that it was all over, and he might now go to sleep safely; and, weary with his long walk, he did sleep, as if in duty bound to do so.

At a very early hour in the morning, the party set off again. The sun that day lighted up for Rudy new mountains, new glaciers, and new snowfields. They had entered the Canton Valais, and were upon the other side of the ridge of hills seen from Grindelwald, yet still far from his new home.

Other mountain clefts, other pastures, other woods, and other hilly

* *Föhn*, a humid south wind on the Swiss mountains and lakes, the forerunner of a storm.—*Translator*.

paths unfolded themselves; other houses, and other people too, Rudy saw. But what kind of human beings were these? The outcasts of fate they were, with frightful, disgusting, yellowish faces, and necks of which the hideous flesh hung down like bags. They were the cretins—poor diseased wretches, dragging themselves along, and looking with stupid lusterless eyes upon the strangers who crossed their path—the women even more disgusting than the men. Were such the persons who surrounded his new home?

THE UNCLE

In his uncle's house, when Rudy arrived there, he saw, and he thanked God for it, people such as he had been accustomed to see. There was only one cretin there, a poor idiotic lad—one of those unfortunate beings who, in their poverty—in fact, in their utter destitution—go by turns to different families and remain a month or two in each house. Poor Saperli happened to be in his uncle's house when Rudy arrived.

The uncle was a bold and experienced hunter, and was also a cooper by trade. His wife a lively little woman, with a face something like that of a bird, eyes like those of an eagle, and a long skinny throat.

Everything was new to Rudy—the dress, customs, employments—even the language itself; but his childish ear would soon learn to understand that. The contrast between his home at his grandfather's and his uncle's abode was very favorable to the latter. The house was larger; the walls were adorned by horns of the chamois and brightly polished guns; a painting of the Virgin Mary hung over the door, and fresh Alpine roses, and a lamp that was kept always burning, were placed before it.

His uncle, as has been told, was one of the most renowned chamois hunters of the district, and was also one of the best and most experienced of the guides.

Rudy became the pet of the house; but there was another pet as well—a blind, lazy old hound, who could no longer be of any use; but he *had been* useful, and the worth of the animal in his earlier days was remembered, and he therefore now lived as one of the family, and had every comfort. Rudy patted the dog, but the animal did not like strangers, and as yet Rudy was a stranger; but he soon won every heart, and became as one of themselves.

"Things don't go so badly in Canton Valais," said his uncle. "We have plenty of chamois; they do not die off so fast as the wild he-goats; matters are much better nowadays than in old times, although they *are* so bepraised. A hole is burst in the bag, and we have a current of air now in our confined valley. Something better always starts up when antiquated things are done away with."

The uncle became quite chatty, and discoursed to the boy of the events of his own boyhood and those of his father. Valais was then, as he called it, only a receptacle for sick people—miserable cretins; “but the French soldiers came, and they made capital doctors; they soon killed the disease, and the patients with it. They know how to strike—aye, how to strike in many ways—and the girls could smite too!” and thereupon the uncle nodded to his wife, who was of French descent, and laughed. “The French could split solid stones if they chose. It was they who cut out of the rocks the road over the Simplon—yes, cut such a road that I could say to a child of three years of age, Go down to Italy! You have but to keep to the highroad, and you find yourself there.” The good man then sang a French *chanson*, and wound up by shouting “hurra!” for Napoleon Bonaparte.

It was the first time that Rudy had ever heard of France, and he was interested in hearing of it, especially Lyons, that great city on the river Rhone, where his uncle had been.

The uncle prophesied that Rudy would become, in a few years, a smart chamois hunter, as he had quite a talent for it. He taught the boy to hold, load, and fire a gun; he took him up with him, in the hunting season, among the hills, and made him drink of the warm chamois' blood to ward off giddiness from the hunter; he taught him to know the time when, upon the different sides of the mountains, avalanches were about to fall, at midday or in the evening, whenever the sun's rays took effect; he taught him to notice the movements of the chamois, and learn their spring, so that he might alight on his feet and stand firmly; and told him that if on the fissures of the rock there was no footing, he must support himself by his elbows, and exert the muscles of his thighs and the calves of his legs to hold on fast. Even the neck could be made of use, if necessary.

The chamois are cunning, and place outposts on the watch; but the hunter must be more cunning, and scent them out. Sometimes he might cheat them by hanging up his hat and coat on an Alpine staff, and the chamois would mistake the coat for the man. This trick the uncle played one day when he was out hunting with Rudy.

The mountain pass was narrow; indeed, there was scarcely a path at all, scarcely more than a slight cornice close to the yawning abyss. The snow that lay there was partially thawed, and the stones crumbled away whenever they were trod on. So the uncle laid himself down his full length, and crept forward. Every fragment of stone that broke off, fell rolling and knocking from one side of the rocky wall to another, until it sank to rest in the dark depths below. About a hundred paces behind his uncle stood Rudy, upon the verge of the last point of solid rock, and as he stood, he saw careering through the air, and hovering

just over his uncle, an immense lämmergeier, which, with the tremendous stroke of its wing, would speedily cast the creeping worm into the abyss beneath, there to prey upon his carcass.

The uncle had eyes for nothing but the chamois, which, with its young kid, had appeared on the other side of the crevasse. Rudy was watching the bird; well did he know what was its aim, and therefore he kept his hand on the gun to fire the moment it might be necessary. Just then the chamois made a bound upward; Rudy's uncle fired, and the animal was hit by the deadly bullet, but the kid escaped as cleverly as if it had had a long life's experience in danger and flight. The enormous bird, frightened by the loud report, wheeled off in another direction; and the uncle was freed from a danger of which he was quite unconscious until he was told of it by Rudy.

As in high good humor they were wending their way homeward, and the uncle was humming an air he remembered from his childish days, they suddenly heard a peculiar noise, which seemed to come from no great distance. They looked round on both sides—they looked upward; and there, in the heights above, on the sloping verge of the mountain, the heavy covering of snow was lifted up, and it heaved as a sheet of linen stretched out heavens when the wind creeps under it. The lofty mass cracked as if it had been a marble slab—it broke, and, resolving itself into a foaming cataract, came rushing down with a rumbling noise like that of distant thunder. It was an avalanche that had fallen, not indeed over Rudy and his uncle, but near them—all too near!

"Hold fast, Rudy—hold fast with all your might!" cried his uncle.

And Rudy threw his arms around the trunk of a tree that was close by, while his uncle climbed above him and held fast to the branches of the tree. The avalanche rolled past at a little distance from them, but the gust of wind that swept like the tail of a hurricane after it, rattled around the trees and bushes, snapped them asunder as if they had been but dry rushes, and cast them down in all directions. Rudy was dashed to the ground, for the trunk of the tree to which he had clung was thus overthrown; the upper part was flung to a great distance. There, amidst the shattered branches, lay his poor uncle with his skull fractured! His hand was still warm, but it would have been impossible to recognize his face. Rudy stood pale and trembling; it was the first shock in his young life—the first moment he had ever felt terror.

Late in the evening he reached his home with the fatal tidings—his home which was now to be the abode of sorrow. The bereaved wife stood like a statue—she did not utter a word—she did not shed a tear; and it was not until the corpse was brought in that her grief found its natural vent. The poor cretin stole away to his bed, and nothing was seen of him during the whole of the next day; toward evening he came to Rudy

"Will you write a letter for me?" he asked. "Saperli cannot write—Saperli can only go down to the post office with the letter."

"A letter for you?" exclaimed Rudy; "and to whom?"

"To our Lord Christ!"

"Whom do you mean?"

And the half-idiot, as the cretin was called, looked with a most touching expression at Rudy, clasped his hands, and said solemnly and reverentially—

"Jesus Christ! Saperli would send Him a letter to pray of Him that Saperli may lie dead, and not the good master of the house here."

And Rudy took his hand and wrung it. "That letter would not reach up yonder—that letter would not restore to us him we have lost."

But Rudy found it very difficult to convince Saperli of the impossibility of his wishes.

"Now you must be the support of the house," said his aunt to him; and Rudy became such.

SABETTE

Who is the best marksman in the Canton Valais? The chamois well knew. "Save yourselves from Rudy!" they might have said. And "who is the handsomest marksman?" "O! it is Rudy!" said the girls. But they did not add, "Save yourselves from Rudy"; neither did the sober mothers say so, for he bowed as politely to them as to the young girls. He was so brave and so joyous, his cheeks so brown, his teeth so white, his dark eyes so sparkling. A handsome young man he was, and only twenty years of age. The most ice-chill water never seemed too cold for him when he was swimming—in fact he was like a fish in the water; he could climb better than any one else; he could also cling fast, like a snail, to the wall of rock. There were good muscles and sinews in him; this was quite evident whenever he made a spring. He had learned first from the cat how to spring, and from the chamois afterward. Rudy had the reputation of being the best guide on the mountain, and he could have made a great deal of money by this occupation. His uncle had also taught him the cooper's trade, but he had no inclination for that. He cared for nothing but chamois hunting; in this he delighted, and it also brought in money. Rudy would be an excellent match, it was said, if he only did not look too high. He was such a good dancer that the girls who were his partners often dreamt of him, and more than one let her thoughts dwell on him even after she awoke.

"He kissed me in the dance!" said Annette, the schoolmaster's daughter, to her dearest friend; but she should not have said this even to her dearest friend. Such secrets are seldom kept: like sand in a bag that has holes, they ooze out. Therefore, however well behaved Rudy might be.

it was soon spread about that he kissed in the dance; and yet he had never kissed her whom he would have liked to kiss.

"Take care of him!" said an old hunter; "he has kissed Annette. He has begun with A, and he will kiss through the whole alphabet."

A kiss in the dance was all that the gossips could find to bring against Rudy; but he certainly had kissed Annette, and yet she was not the flower of his heart.

Below at Bex, amidst the great walnut trees, close to a small rushing mountain stream, lived the rich miller. His dwelling house was a large building of three stories high, with small turrets; its roof was composed of shavings of wood covered with tinned iron plates, which shone in sunshine and moonshine; on the highest turret was a vane, a glittering arrow passed through an apple, in allusion to Tell's celebrated arrow shot. The mill was a conspicuous object, and permitted itself to be sketched or written about; but the miller's daughter did not permit herself to be described in writing or to be sketched—so at least Rudy would have said. And yet her image was engraved on his heart; both her eyes blazed in on it, so that it was quite in flames. The fire had, like other fires, come on suddenly; and the strangest part of it was, that the miller's daughter, the charming Babette, was quite ignorant of it, for she and Rudy had never so much as spoken two words to each other.

The miller was rich, and, on account of his wealth, Babette was rather high to aspire to. "But nothing is so high," said Rudy to himself, "that one may not aspire to it. One must climb perseveringly, and if one has confidence one does not fall." He had received this teaching in his early home.

It so happened that Rudy had some business to transact at Bex. It was a long journey to that place, for there was then no railroad. From the glaciers of the Rhone, immediately at the foot of the Simplon, among many and often shifting mountain peaks, stretches the broad valley of the Canton Valais, with its mighty river, the Rhone, whose waters are often so swollen as to overflow its banks, inundating fields and roads, and destroying all. Between the towns of Sion and St. Maurice the valley takes a turn, bending like an elbow, and below St. Maurice becomes so narrow that there is only space for the bed of the river and the confined carriage road. An old tower, like the guardian of the Canton Valais, which ends here, stands on the side of the mountain, and commands a view over the stone bridge to the custom house on the other side, where the Canton Vaud commences; and nearest of the not very distant towns lies Bex. In this part, at every step forward, are displayed increased fruitfulness and abundance; one enters, as it were, a grove of chestnut and walnut trees. Here and there peep forth cypresses and pomegranates. It is almost as warm there as in Italy.

Rudy reached Bex, got through his business, and looked about him;

but not a soul (putting Babette out of the question) belonging to the mill did he see. This was not what he wanted.

Evening came on; the air was filled with the perfume of the wild thyme and the blossoming lime trees; there lay what seemed a shining sky-blue veil over the wooded green hills; a stillness reigned around—not the stillness of sleep, not the stillness of death—no, it was as if all nature was holding its breath, in order that its image might be photographed upon the blue surface of the heavens above. Here and there amidst the trees stood poles, or posts, which conveyed the wires of the telegraph along the silent valley; close against one of these leaned an object, so motionless that one might have thought it was the decayed trunk of a tree, but it was Rudy, who was standing there as still as was all around him at that moment. He was not sleeping, neither was he dead; but, as through the wires of the telegraph there are often transmitted the great events of the world, and matters of the utmost importance to individuals, without the wires, by the slightest tremor or the faintest tone, betraying them, so there passed through Rudy's mind anxious overwhelming thoughts, fraught with the happiness of his future life, and constituting, from this time forth, his one unchanging aim. His eyes were fixed on one point before him, and that was a light in the parlor of the miller's house, where Babette resided. Rudy stood so still that one might have thought he was on the watch to fire at a chamois; but he was himself at that moment like a chamois, which one minute could stand as if it were chiseled out of the rock, and suddenly, if a stone but rolled past, would make a spring and leave the hunter in the lurch. And thus did Rudy, for a thought rolled through his mind.

"Never despair!" said he; "a visit to the mill, say good evening to the miller, and good day to Babette. One does not fall unless one fears to do so. If I am to be Babette's husband, she must see me some day or other."

And Rudy laughed, and made up his mind to go to the miller's; he knew what he wanted, and that was to marry Babette.

The stream, with its yellowish-white water, was dashing on; the willows and lime trees hung over it. Rudy, as it stands in the old nursery rhyme—

*Found to the miller's house his way;
But there was nobody at home,
Except a pussy cat at play!*

The cat, which was standing on the steps, put up its back and mewed; but Rudy was no way inclined to listen to it. He knocked at the door; no one seemed to hear him, no one answered. The cat mewed again. Had Rudy been still a little boy, he might have understood the cat's language, and heard that it said "No one is at home." But now he had to go to the mill to make the necessary inquiries, and there he was told

that the master had gone on a long journey to the town of Interlaken—"Inter Lacus, amidst the lakes," as the schoolmaster, Annette's father, in his great learning had explained the name.

Ah! so far away, then, were the miller and Babette? There was a great shooting match to be held at Interlaken; it was to begin the next morning, and to last for eight days. The Swiss from all the German cantons were to assemble there.

Poor Rudy! it was not a fortunate time for him to have come to Bex. He had only to return again; and he did so, taking the road over St. Maurice and Sion to his own valley, his own hills. But he was not disheartened. When the sun rose next morning, he was in high spirits, but indeed they had never been depressed.

"Babette is at Interlaken, a journey of many days from this," he said to himself. "It is a long way off if one goes by the circuitous highroad, but not so far if one cuts across the mountains, and that way just suits a chamois hunter. I have gone that way before; over yonder lies my early home, where, as a little boy, I lived with my grandfather. And there are shooting matches at Interlaken; I shall take my place as the first there, and there also shall I be with Babette, when I become acquainted with her."

Carrying his light knapsack, with his Sunday finery in it, with his musket and game bag, Rudy went up the mountain, the shortest way, yet still tolerably long; but the shooting matches were only to commence that day, and were to continue for a week. During all that time, he had been assured, the miller and Babette would stay with their relatives at Interlaken. So over the Gemmi trudged Rudy; he proposed descending near Grindelwald.

In high health and spirits he set off, enjoying the fresh, pure, and invigorating mountain air. The valleys sank deeper, the horizon became more extensive; here a snow-crested summit, there another, and speedily the whole of the bright shining Alpine range, became visible. Rudy knew well every ice-clad peak. He kept his course opposite to Schreckhorn, which raised its white powdered stone finger high toward the blue vault above.

At length he had crossed the loftier mountain ridge. The pasture lands sloped down toward the valley that was his former home. The air was pleasant, his thoughts were pleasant; hill and dale were blooming with flowers and verdure, and his heart was full of the glowing dreams of youth; he felt as if old age, as if death, were never to approach him; life, power, enjoyment were before him. Free as a bird, light as a bird was Rudy; and the swallows flew past him, and sang as in the days of his childhood, "We and you, and you and we!" All was motion and pleasure.

Beneath lay the green velvet meadows, dotted with brown wooden

houses; the river Lüttschine rushed foaming along. He saw the glacier with its borders like green glass edging the dirty snow, and he saw the deep chasms, while the sound of the church bells came upon his ear, as if they were ringing a welcome to his old home. His heart beat rapidly, and his mind became so full of old recollections that for a moment he almost forgot Babette.

He was again traversing the same road where, as a little boy, he had stood along with other children to sell their carved wooden toy houses. Yonder, above the pine trees, still stood his grandfather's house, but strangers dwelt there now. The children came running after him, as formerly; they wished to sell their little wares. One of them offered him an Alpine rose; Rudy took it as a good omen, and thought of Babette. He had soon crossed the bridge where the two Lüttschines unite, and reached the smiling country where the walnut and other embowering trees afford grateful shade. He soon perceived waving flags, and beheld the white cross on the red ground—the standard of the Swiss as of the Danes—and before him lay Interlaken.

Rudy thought it was certainly a splendid town—a Swiss town in its holiday dress. It was not, like other market towns, a heap of heavy stone houses, stiff, foreign looking, and aiming at grandeur; no! it looked as if the wooden houses from the hills above had taken a start into the green valley beneath, with its clear stream whose waters rushed swiftly as an arrow, and had ranged themselves into rows—somewhat uneven, it is true—to form the street. And that prettiest of all, the street which had been built since Rudy, as a little boy, had last been there—*that* seemed to be composed of all the nicest wooden houses his grandfather had cut out, and with which the cupboard at home had been filled. These seemed to have transplanted themselves there, and to have grown in size, as the old chestnut trees had done.

Every house almost was a hotel, as it was called, with carved wooden work round the windows and balconies, with smart-looking roofs, and before each house a flower garden, between it and the wide macadamized highroad. Near these houses, but only on one side of the road, stood some other houses: had they formed a double row, they would have concealed the fresh green meadow, where wandered the cows with bells that rang as among the high Alpine pastures. The valley was encircled by lofty hills, which, about the center, seemed to retire a little to one side, so as to render visible that glittering snow-white Jungfrau, the most beautiful in form of all the mountains of Switzerland.

What a number of gayly dressed gentlemen and ladies from foreign lands—what crowds of Swiss from the adjacent cantons! The candidates for the prizes carried the numbers of their shots in a garland round their hats. There was music of all kinds—singing, hand-organs, and wind

instruments, shouting and racket. The houses and bridges were adorned with verses and emblems. Flags and banners waved; the firing of gun after gun was heard, and that was the best music to Rudy's ears. Amidst all this excitement he almost forgot Babette, for whose sake only he had gone there.

Crowds were thronging to the target shooting. Rudy was soon among them, and he was always the luckiest—the best shot—for he always struck the bull's-eye.

"Who is that young stranger—that capital marksman?" was asked around. "He speaks the French language as they speak it in the Canton Valais; he also expresses himself fluently in our German," said several people.

"When a child he lived here in the valley, near Grindelwald," replied some one.

The youth was full of life; his eyes sparkled, his aim was steady, his arm sure, and therefore his shots always told. Good fortune bestows courage, and Rudy had always courage. He had soon a whole circle of friends round him. Every one noticed him; in short, he became the observed of all observers. Babette had almost vanished from his thoughts. Just then a heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a rough voice accosted him in the French language with—

"You are from the Canton Valais?"

Rudy turned round, and beheld a red jolly countenance and a stout person. It was the rich miller from Bex; his broad bulk hid the slender lovely Babette, who, however, soon came forward with her dark, bright eyes. The rich miller was very proud that it was a huntsman from his own canton that had been declared the best shot, and was so much distinguished and so much praised. Rudy was truly the child of good fortune; what he had traveled so far to look for, but had since his arrival nearly forgotten, now sought him.

When at a distance from home one meets persons from thence, acquaintance is speedily made, and people speak as if they knew each other. Rudy held the first place at the shooting matches, as the miller held the first place at Bex, on account of his money and his mill. So the two men shook hands, although they had never met before; Babette, too, held out her hand frankly to Rudy, and he pressed it warmly, and gazed with such admiration at her that she became scarlet.

The miller talked of the long journey they had made, and the numerous large towns they had seen, and how they had traveled both by steam and by post.

"I came the shorter way," said Rudy; "I went over the mountains. There is no road so high that one cannot venture to take it."

"Aye, at the risk of breaking one's neck!" replied the miller; "and you look just like one who will some day or other break his neck—you are so daring!"

"One does not fall unless one has the fear of doing so," said Rudy.

And the miller's relations at Interlaken, with whom he and Babette were staying, invited Rudy to visit them, since he came from the same canton as did their kindred. It was a pleasant invitation for Rudy. Luck was with him, as it always is with those who depend upon themselves, and remember that "our Lord bestows nuts upon us, but He does not crack them for us!"

And Rudy sat, almost like one of the family, amongst the miller's relations, and a toast was drunk in honor of the best shot, to which Rudy returned thanks, after clinking glasses with Babette.

In the evening the whole party took a walk on the pretty avenue past the gay looking hotels under the walnut trees; and there was such a crowd, and so much pushing, that Rudy had to offer his arm to Babette. He told her how happy he was to have met people from the Canton Vaud, for Vaud and Valais were close neighbors. He spoke so cordially that Babette could not resist slightly squeezing his hand. They seemed almost like old acquaintances, and she was very lively—that pretty little girl. Rudy was much amused at her remarks on what was absurd and overfine in the dress of the foreign ladies, and the affectation of some of them; but she did not wish to ridicule them, for there might be some excellent people among them—yes, nice amiable people, Babette was sure of that, for she had a godmother who was a very superior English lady. Eighteen years before, when Babette was christened, that lady was at Bex; she had given Babette the valuable brooch she wore. Her godmother had written to her twice, and this year they were to have met her at Interlaken, whither she was coming with her daughters; they were old maids, going on for thirty, said Babette—she herself was only eighteen.

The tongue in her pretty little mouth was not still for a moment, and all that she said appeared to Rudy as matters of the greatest importance. And he told her what he had to tell—told her how he had been to Bex, how well he knew the mill, and how often he had seen her, though, of course, she had never remarked him. He said he had been more distressed than he could tell, when he found that she and her father were away, far away; but still not too far to prevent one from scrambling over the wall that made the road so long.

He said all this, and he said a great deal more; he told her how much she occupied his thoughts, and that it was on her account, and not for the sake of the shooting matches, that he had come to Interlaken.

Babette became very silent—it was almost too much, all that he confided to her.

As they walked on, the sun sank behind the lofty heights, and the Jungfrau stood in strong relief, clothed in a splendor and brilliancy reflected by the green woods of the surrounding hills. Every one stood still and gazed at it; Rudy and Babette also stood and looked at the magnificent scene.

"Nothing can be more beautiful than this!" said Babette.

"Nothing!" said Rudy, with his eyes fixed upon Babette.

"Tomorrow I must go," he added a little after.

"Come and visit us at Bex," whispered Babette; "my father will be so glad to see you."

ON THE WAY HOME

O! how much had not Rudy to carry next day when he started on his journey homewards over the mountains! He had actually to carry two handsome guns, three silver goblets, and a silver coffeepot—the latter would be of use when he set up a house. But these valuables were not the weightiest load he had to bear; a still weightier load he had to carry—or did it carry him?—over the high, high hills.

The road was rough; the weather was dismal, gloomy, and rainy; the clouds hung like a mourning veil over the summits of the mountains, and shrouded their shining peaks. From the woods had resounded the last stroke of the ax, and down the side of the hill rolled the trunks of the trees; they looked like sticks from the vast heights above, but nearer they were seen to be like the thick masts of ships. The river murmured with its monotonous sound, the wind whistled, the clouds began to sail hurriedly along.

Close by Rudy suddenly appeared a young girl; he had not observed her until she was quite near him. She also was going to cross the mountain. Her eyes had an extraordinary power; they seemed to have a spell in them—they were so clear, so deep, so unfathomable.

"Have you a lover?" asked Rudy. All his thoughts were filled with love.

"I have none," she replied with a laugh, but it seemed as if she did not speak the truth. "Let us not go the long way round. We must keep to the left; it is shorter."

"Yes—to fall into some crevasse," said Rudy. "You should know the paths better if you take upon yourself to be a guide."

"I know the way well," she rejoined, "and I have my wits about me. Your thoughts are down yonder in the valley. Up here one should think of the Ice Maiden. Mankind say that she is not friendly to their race."

"I am not in the least afraid of her," said Rudy. "She could not keep me when I was a child; she shall not catch me now I am a grown-up man."

It became very dark, the rain fell, and it began to snow heavily; it dazzled the eyes, and blinded them.

"Give me your hand, and I will help you to mount upward," said the girl, as she touched him with her ice-cold fingers.

"*You* help me!" cried Rudy. "I do not yet require a woman's help in climbing"; and he walked on more briskly away from her. The snowstorm thickened like a curtain around him, the wind moaned, and behind him he heard the girl laughing and singing. It sounded so strangely. It was surely Glamourie, she surely, one of the attendants of the Ice Maiden; Rudy had heard of such things when, as a little boy, he had spent a night on the mountains, on his journey over the hills.

The snow fell more thickly, the clouds lay below him. He looked back; there was no one to be seen, but he heard laughter and jeering, and it did not seem to come from a human being.

When at length Rudy had reached the highest part of the mountain, where the path led down to the valley of the Rhone, he perceived on the pale blue of the horizon, in the direction of Chamouni, two glittering stars. They shone so brightly; and he thought of Babette, of himself, and of his happiness, and became warm with these thoughts.

THE VISIT TO THE MILL

"You have really brought costly things home," said his old foster mother, and her strange, eagle eyes sparkled, while she worked her thin, wrinkled neck even more quickly than usual. "You carry good luck with you, Rudy. I must kiss you, my dear boy."

Rudy allowed himself to be kissed, but it was evident by his countenance that he did not relish this domestic greeting.

"How handsome you are, Rudy!" exclaimed the old woman.

"O! don't flatter me," replied Rudy, laughing; but he was pleased at the compliment nevertheless.

"I repeat it," said the old woman, "and good fortune smiles on you."

"Yes, I believe you are right there," he said, while his thoughts strayed to Babette.

Never before had he longed so much for the deep valley.

"They must have come back," he said to himself; "it is now more than two days over the time they fixed for their return. I must go to Bex."

And to Bex he went. The miller and his daughter were at home; he was well received, and many greetings were given to him from the family at Interlaken. Babette did not speak much; she had become very silent. But her eyes spoke, and that was quite enough for Rudy. The

millers, who generally had enough to say, and was accustomed to joke and have all his jokes laughed at, for he was *the rich miller*, seemed to prefer listening to Rudy's stirring adventures, and hearing him tell of all the difficulties and dangers that the chamois hunter had to encounter on the mountain heights—how he had to crawl along the unsafe snowy cornice work on the edges of the hills, which was attached to the rocks by the force of the wind and weather, and tread the frail bridges the snowstorm had cast over many a deep abyss.

Rudy spoke with much spirit, and his eyes sparkled while he described the life of a hunter, the cunning of the chamois and the wonderful springs they took, the mighty *föhn*, and the rolling avalanche. He observed that, at every new description, he won more and more upon the miller, and that the latter was particularly interested in his account of the *lämmergeier* and the bold royal eagle.

Not far from Bex, in the Canton Valais, there was an eagle's nest, built most ingeniously under a projecting platform of rock, on the margin of the hill; there was a young one in it, which no one could take. An Englishman had, a few days before, offered Rudy a large handful of gold if he would bring him the young eagle alive.

"But there are limits even to the most reckless daring," said Rudy. "The young eagle up there is not to be got at: it would be madness to make the attempt."

And the wine circulated fast, and the conversation flowed on fast, and Rudy thought the evening was much too short, although it was past midnight when he left the miller's house after this his first visit.

The lights shone for a short time through the windows, and were reflected on the green branches of the trees, while through the skylight on the roof, which was open, crept out the parlor Cat, and met in the water conduit on the roof the kitchen Cat.

"Don't you see that there is something new going on here?" said the parlor Cat. "There is secret love-making in the house. The father knows nothing of it yet. Rudy and Babette have been all the evening treading on each other's toes under the table: they trod on me twice, but I did not mew, for that would have aroused suspicion."

"Well I would have done it," said the kitchen Cat.

"What might suit the kitchen would not do in the parlor," replied the parlor Cat. "I should like very much to know what the miller will say when he hears of this engagement."

Yes, indeed—what would the miller say? *That* Rudy also was anxious to know. He could not bring himself to wait long. Therefore, before many days had passed, when the omnibus rolled over the bridge between the Cantons Valais and Vaud, Rudy sat in it, with plenty of confidence

as usual, and pleasant thoughts of the favorable answer he expected that evening.

And when the evening had come, and the omnibus was returning, Rudy also sat in it, going homewards. But, at the miller's, the parlor Cat jumped out again.

"Look here, you from the kitchen—the miller knows everything now. There was a strange end to the affair. Rudy came here toward the afternoon, and he and Babette had a great deal to whisper about; they stood on the path a little below the miller's room. I lay at their feet, but they had neither eyes nor thoughts for me.

"'I will go straight to your father,' said Rudy; 'my proposal is honest and honorable.'

"'Shall I go with you,' said Babette, 'that I may give you courage?'

"'I have plenty of courage,' replied Rudy, 'but if you are with me, he must put some control upon himself, whether he likes the matter or not.'

"'So they went in. Rudy trod heavily on my tail—he is very clumsy. I mewed, but neither he nor Babette had ears for me. They opened the door, and entered together, and I with them, but I sprang up to the back of a chair. I could scarcely hear what Rudy said, but I heard how the master blazed forth: it was a regular turning him out of his doors up to the mountains and the chamois. Rudy might look after these, but not after our little Babette.'

"'But what did they say?'" asked the kitchen Cat.

"Say! they said all that is generally said under such circumstances when people go a-wooing. 'I love her, and she loves me; and when there is milk in the can for one, there is milk in the can for two.'

"'But she is far above you,' said the miller; 'she has lots of gold, and you have none. Don't you see that you cannot aspire to her?'

"'There is nothing or no one so high that one may not reach if one is only determined to do so,' said Rudy, getting angry.

"'But you said not long since that you could not reach the young eagle in its nest. Babette is a still higher and more difficult prize for you to take.'

"'I will take them both,' replied Rudy.

"'Very well! I will give her to you when you bring me the young eaglet alive,' said the miller, and he laughed until the tears stood in his eyes. 'But now, thank you for your visit, Rudy! If you come again tomorrow, you will find no one at home. Farewell, Rudy!'

"And Babette also said farewell, in as timid and pitiable a voice as that of a little kitten which cannot see its mother."

"'A promise is a promise, and a man is a man!' said Rudy. 'Do not weep, Babette; I shall bring the young eagle.'

"'You will break your neck, I hope!' exclaimed the miller; 'then we shall be free of this bad job.' I call that sending him off with a flea in his ear! Now Rudy is gone, and Babette sits and cries, but the miller sings German songs which he learned in his journey. I shall not distress myself about the matter; it would do no good."

"But it is all very curious," said the kitchen Cat.

THE EAGLE'S NEST

From the mountain path came the sound of a person whistling in a strain so lively that it betokened good humor and undaunted courage. The whistler was Rudy; he was going to his friend Vesinand.

"You must help me! We shall take Ragli with us. I must carry off the young eagle up yonder under the shelving rock!"

"Had you not better try first to take down the moon? That would be about as hopeful an undertaking," said Vesinand. "You are in great spirits, I see."

"Yes, for I am thinking of my wedding. But now, to speak seriously, you shall know how matters stand with me."

And Vesinand and Ragli were soon made acquainted with what Rudy wished.

"You are a daring fellow," they said, "but you won't succeed—you will break your neck."

"One does not fall if one has no fear!" said Rudy.

About midnight they set out with alpenstocks, ladders, and ropes. The road lay through copsewood and brushwood, over rolling stones—upward, always upward, upward in the dark and gloomy night. The waters roared below, the waters murmured above, humid clouds swept heavily along. The hunters reached at length the precipitous ridge of rock. It became even darker here, for the walls of rock almost met, and light penetrated only a little way down from the open space above. Close by, under them, was a deep abyss, with its hoarse-sounding, raging water.

They sat all three quite still. They had to await the dawn of day, when the parent eagle should fly out; then only could they fire if they had any hope to capture the young one. Rudy sat as still as if he had been a portion of the rock on which he sat. He held his gun ready to fire; his eyes were steadily fixed on the highest part of the cleft, under a projecting rock of which the eagle's nest was concealed. The three hunters had long to wait.

At length, high above them was heard a crashing, whirring noise; the air was darkened by a large object soaring in it. Two guns were ready to aim at the enormous eagle the moment it flew from its nest.

A shot was fired; for an instant the outspread wings fluttered, and then the bird began to sink slowly, and it seemed as if with its size and the stretch of its wings it would fill the whole chasm, and in its fall drag the hunters down with it. The eagle disappeared in the abyss below; the cracking of the trees and bushes was heard, which were snapped and crushed in the fall of the stupendous bird.

And now commenced the business that had brought the hunters there. Three of the longest ladders were tied securely together. They were intended to reach the outermost and last stepping place on the margin of the abyss; but they did not reach so high up, and smooth as a well-built wall was the perpendicular rocky ascent a good way higher up, where the nest was hidden under the shelter of the uppermost projecting portion of rock. After some consultation the young men came to the conclusion, that there was nothing better to be done than to hoist far up two more ladders tied together, and then to attach these to the three which had already been raised. With immense difficulty they pushed the two ladders up, and the ropes were made fast; the ladders shot out from over the rock, and hung there swaying in the air above the unfathomable depth beneath. Rudy had placed himself already on the lowest step. It was an ice-cold morning; the mist was rising heavily from the dark chasm below. Rudy sat as a fly sits upon some swinging straw which a bird, building its nest, might have dropped on the edge of the lofty eyrie it had chosen for its site; but the insect could fly if the straw gave way—Rudy could but break his neck. The wind was howling around him, and away in the abyss below roared the gushing water from the melting glacier—the Ice Maiden's palace.

His ascent set the ladder into a tremulous motion, as the spider does which holds fast to its long waving slender thread. When Rudy had gained the top of the fourth ladder, he felt more confidence in them: he knew that they had been bound together by sure and skillful hands, though they dangled as if they had had but slight fastenings.

But there was even more dangerous work before Rudy than mounting a line of ladders that now swayed like a frame of rushes in the air, and now knocked against the perpendicular rock: he had to climb as a cat climbs. But Rudy could do that, thanks to the cat who had taught him. He did not perceive the presence of Vertigo, who trod the air behind him, and stretched forth her polypus arms after him. He gained, at length, the last step of the highest ladder, and then he observed that he had not got high enough even to see into the nest. It was only by using his hands that he could raise himself up to it; he tried if the lowest part of the thick interlaced underwood, which formed the base of the nest, was sufficiently strong; and when he had assured himself that the stunted trees were firm, he swung himself up by them from the ladder,

until his head and breast had reached the level of the nest. But then poured forth on him a stifling stench of carrion; for putrefied lambs, chamois, and birds lay there crowded together.

Swimming-in-the-Head, a sister to Vertigo, though it could not overpower him, puffed the disgusting almost poisonous odor into his face, that he might become faint; and down below, in the black yawning ravine, upon the dank dashing waters, sat the Ice Maiden herself, with her long pale-green hair, and gazed upward with her death-giving eyes, while she exclaimed—

“Now I will seize you!”

In a corner of the eagle's nest, Rudy beheld the eaglet sitting—a large and powerful creature, even though it could not yet fly. Rudy fixed his eyes on it, held on marvelously with one hand, and with the other hand cast a noose around the young eagle; it was captured alive, its legs were in the tightened cord, and Rudy flung the sling with the bird over his shoulder, so that the creature hung a good way down beneath him, as, with the help of a rope, he held on, until his foot touched at last the highest step of the ladder.

“Hold fast! don't fear to fall, and you will not do so!” Such was his early lesson, and Rudy acted on it: he held fast, crept down, and did not fall.

Then arose a shout of joy and congratulation. Rudy stood safely on the rocky ground, laden with his prize, the young eagle.

WHAT MORE THE PARLOR CAT HAD TO TELL

“Here is what you demanded!” said Rudy, as he entered the miller's house at Bex, and placed on the floor a large basket. When he took its cover off, there glared forth two yellow eyes surrounded with a dark ring—eyes so flashing, so wild, that they looked as though they would burn or blast everything they saw; the short hard beak opened to bite; the neck was red and downy.

“The young eagle!” exclaimed the miller. Babette screamed, and sprang to one side, but could not take her eyes off from Rudy and the eaglet.

“You are not to be frightened!” said the miller, addressing Rudy.

“And you will keep your word,” said Rudy; “every one has his object.”

“But how is it that you did not break your neck?” asked the miller.

“Because I held fast,” replied Rudy; “and so I do now—: hold fast to Babette.”

“Wait till you get her!” said the miller, laughing, and Babette thought that was a good sign.

"Let us take the young eagle out of the basket; it is frightful to see how its eyes glare. How did you manage to capture it?"

Rudy had to describe his feat, and, as he spoke, the miller's eyes opened wider and wider.

"With your confidence and your good fortune, you might maintain three wives," said the miller.

"O, thank you!" cried Rudy.

"But you won't get Babette just yet," said the miller, slapping the young Alpine hunter with good humor on his shoulder.

"Do you know there is something going on again here!" said the parlor Cat to the kitchen Cat. "Rudy has brought us the young eagle, and takes Babette as his reward. They have kissed each other in the father's presence! That was as good as a betrothal. The old man did not storm at all; he kept in his claws, took an afternoon nap, and left the two to sit and chatter to each other. They have so much to say that they will not be tired talking till Christmas."

And they were not tired talking till Christmas. The wind whirled in eddies through the groves, and shook down the yellow leaves; the snow-drifts appeared in the valleys as well as on the lofty hills; the Ice Maiden sat in her proud palace, which she occupied during the winter time; the upright walls of rock were covered with sleet; enormous masses of ice tapestry were to be seen where, in summer, the mountain streams came pouring down; fantastic garlands of crystal ice hung over the snow-powdered pine trees. The Ice Maiden rode on the howling wind, over the deepest dales. The carpet of snow was laid down as far as Bex; she could go there, and see Rudy in the house where he now passed so much of his time with Babette. The wedding was to take place in summer, and they heard enough of it—their friends talked so much about it.

There came sunshine; the most beautiful Alpine roses bloomed. The lovely laughing Babette was as charming as the early spring—the spring which makes all the birds sing of summer time, when was to be the wedding day.

"How these two do sit and hang over each other!" exclaimed the parlor Cat. "I am sick of all this stuff."

THE ICE MAIDEN'S SCORN OF MANKIND

Spring had unfolded her fresh green garlands of walnut and chestnut trees which were bursting into bloom, particularly in the country that extends from the bridge at St. Maurice to the Lake of Geneva and the banks of the Rhone, which, with wild speed, rushes from its source under the green glaciers—the Ice Palace where the Ice Maiden dwells

—whence, on the keen wind, she permits herself to be borne up to the highest fields of snow, and, in the warm sunshine, reclines on their drifting masses. Here she sat, and gazed fixedly down into the deep valley beneath, where human beings, like ants on a sunlit stone, were to be seen busily moving about.

"Beings of mental power, as the children of the sun call you," cried the Ice Maiden, "ye are but vermin! Let a snowball but roll down, and you and your houses and your villages are crushed and overwhelmed." And she raised her proud head higher, and looked with death-threatening eyes around her and below her. But from the valley arose a strange sound: it was the blasting of rocks—the work of men—the forming of roads and tunnels before the railway was laid down.

"They are working underground like moles; they are digging passages in the rock, and therefore are heard these sounds like the reports of guns. I shall remove my palaces, for the noise is greater than the roar of thunder itself."

There ascended from the valley a thick smoke, which seemed agitated like a fluttering veil: it came curling up from the locomotive, which upon the newly opened railway drew the train, that, carriage linked to carriage, looked like a winding serpent. With an arrow's speed it shot past.

"They pretend to be the masters down yonder, these powers of mind!" exclaimed the Ice Maiden; "but the mighty powers of nature are still the rulers."

And she laughed, she sang; her voice resounded through the valley.

"An avalanche is falling!" cried the people down there.

Then the children of the sun sang in louder strains about the power of thought in mankind. It commands all, it brings the wide ocean under the yoke, levels mountains, fills up valleys; the power of thought in mankind makes them lords over the powers of nature.

Just at that moment, there came, crossing the snowfields where the Ice Maiden sat, a party of travelers; they had bound themselves fast to each other, to be as one large body upon the slippery ice, near the deep abyss.

"Vermin!" she exclaimed. "You the lords of the powers of nature!" and she turned away from them, and looked scornfully toward the deep valley, where the railway train was rushing by.

"There they go, these thoughts! They are full of might; I see them everywhere. One stands alone like a king, others stand in a group, and yonder half of them are asleep. And when the steam engine stops still, they get out and go their way. The thoughts then go forth into the world." And she laughed.

"There goes another avalanche!" said the inhabitants of the valley.

"It will not reach us," cried two who sat together in the train—"two

souls, but one mind," as has been said. These were Rudy and Babette; the miller accompanied them.

"Like baggage," he said, "I am with them as a sort of necessary appendage."

"There sit the two," said the Ice Maiden. "Many a chamois have I crushed, millions of Alpine roses have I snapped and broken, not a root left—I destroyed them all! Thought—power of mind, indeed!"

And she laughed again.

"There goes another avalanche!" said those down in the valley.

THE GODMOTHER

At Montreux, one of the nearest towns, which, with Clarens, Bernex, and Crin, encircle the northeast part of the Lake of Geneva, resided Babette's godmother, the distinguished English lady, with her daughters and a young relation. They had only lately arrived, yet the miller had already paid them a visit, announced Babette's engagement, and told about Rudy and the young eagle, the visit to Interlaken—in short, the whole story; and it had highly interested his hearers, and pleased them with Rudy, Babette, and even the miller himself. They were invited all three to come to Montreux, and they went. Babette ought to see her godmother, and her godmother wished to see her.

At the little town of Villeneuve, about the end of the Lake of Geneva, lay the steamboat, that, in a voyage of half an hour, went from thence to Bernex, a little way below Montreux. It is a coast which has often been celebrated in song by poets. There, under the walnut trees, on the banks of the deep bluish-green lake, Byron sat, and wrote his melodious verses about the prisoner in the gloomy mountain castle of Chillon. There, where Clarens is reflected amidst weeping willows in the clear water, wandered Rousseau, dreaming of Eloise. The river Rhone glides away under the lofty snow-clad hills of Savoy; here there lies not far from its mouth a small island, so small that from the shore it looks as if it were but a toy islet. It is a patch of rocky ground, which about a century ago, a lady caused to be walled round and covered with earth, in which three acacia trees were planted; these now overshadow the whole island. Babette had always been charmed with this little islet; she thought it the loveliest spot that was to be seen on the whole voyage. She said she would like so much to land there—she must land there—it would be so delightful under these beautiful trees. But the steamer passed it by, and did not stop until it had reached Bernex.

The little party proceeded thence up amidst the white sunlit walls that surrounded the vineyards in front of the little town of Montreux, where the peasants' houses are shaded by fig trees, and laurels and

cypresses grow in the gardens. Half way up the ascent stood the boarding house where the godmother lived.

The meeting was very cordial. The godmother was a stout pleasant-looking woman, with a round smiling face. When a child she must certainly have exhibited quite a Raphael-like cherub's head; it was still an angel's head, but older, and with silver-white hair clustering round it. The daughters were well dressed, elegant looking, tall and slender. The young cousin who was with them, and who was dressed in white almost from top to toe, and had red hair and red whiskers large enough to have been divided among three gentlemen, began immediately to pay the utmost attention to little Babette.

Splendidly bound books and drawings were lying on the large table; music books were also to be seen in the room. The balcony looked out upon the beautiful lake, which was so bright and calm that the mountains of Savoy, with their villages, woods, and snowpeaks, were clearly reflected in it.

Rudy, who was generally so lively and so undaunted, found himself not at all at his ease. He was obliged to be as much on his guard as if he were walking on pease over a slippery floor. How tediously time passed! It was like being in a treadmill. And now they were to go out to walk! This was quite as tiresome. Two steps forward and one backward Rudy had to take to keep pace with the others. Down to Chillon, the gloomy old castle on the rocky island, they went, to look at instruments of torture and dungeons, rusty fetters attached to the rocky walls, stone pallets for those condemned to death, trap doors through which the unfortunate creatures were hurled down to fall upon iron spikes amidst burning piles. They called it a pleasure to look at all these! A dreadful place of execution it was, elevated by Byron's verse into the world of poetry. Rudy viewed it only as a place of execution. He leaned against the wide stone embrasure of the window, and gazed down on the deep blue-green of the water, and over to the little solitary island with the three acacias: how much he wished himself there—free from the whole babbling party!

But Babette felt quite happy. She had been excessively amused, she said afterward; the cousin had "found her perfect."

"O yes—mere idle talk!" replied Rudy; and this was the first time he had ever said anything that did not please her.

The Englishman had made her a present of a little book as a souvenir of Chillon; it was Byron's poem, the "Prisoner of Chillon," translated into French, so that Babette was able to read it.

"The book may be good enough," said Rudy, "but the nicely combed fop who gave it to you is no favorite of mine."

"He looks like a meal sack without meal," cried the miller, laughing at his own wit.

Rudy laughed too, and said it was an excellent remark.

THE COUSIN

When Rudy a few days afterward went to pay a visit to the miller, he found the young Englishman there. Babette had just placed before him a plate of trout, and she had taken much pains to decorate the dish. Rudy thought that was unnecessary. What was the Englishman doing there? What did he want? Why was he thus served and pampered by Babette? Rudy was jealous, and that pleased Babette. It amused her to see all the feelings of his heart—the strong and the weak. Love was to her as yet but a pastime, and she played with Rudy's whole heart; but nevertheless it is certain that he was the center of all her thoughts—the dearest, the most valued in this world. Still, the more gloomy he looked, the merrier her eyes laughed. She could almost have kissed the fair Englishman with the red whiskers, if she could by doing this have seen Rudy rush out in a rage; it would have shown her how greatly she was beloved by him.

This was not right, not wise in little Babette; but she was only nineteen years of age. She did not reflect on her unkindness to Rudy; still less did she think how her conduct might appear to the young Englishman, or if it were not lighter and more wanting in propriety than became the miller's modest, lately betrothed daughter.

Where the highway from Bex passes under the snow-clad rocky heights, which, in the language of the country, are called Diablerets, stood the mill, not far from a rapid rushing mountain stream of a grayish-white color and looking as if covered with soapsuds. It was not that which turned the mill, but a smaller stream, which on the other side of the river came tumbling down the rocks, and through a circular reservoir surrounded by stones in the road beneath, with its violence and speed forced itself up and ran into an inclosed basin, a wide dam which, above the rushing river, turned the large wheel of the mill. When the dam was full of water, it overflowed, and caused the path to be so damp and slippery that it was difficult to walk on it, and there was the chance of a fall into the water, and being carried by it more swiftly than pleasantly toward the mill. Such a mishap had nearly befallen the young Englishman. Equipped in white like a miller's man, he was climbing the path in the evening, guided by the light that shone from Babette's chamber window. He had never learned to climb, and had almost gone head foremost into the water, but escaped with wet arms and bespattered clothes. Covered with mud and dirty-looking, he ar-

rived beneath Babette's window, clambered up the old linden tree, and there began to mimic the owl—no other bird could he attempt to imitate. Babette heard the sounds, and peeped through the thin curtains; but when she saw the man in white and felt certain who he was, her little heart beat with terror, and also with anger. She quickly extinguished her light, felt if the window were securely fastened, and then left him to screech at his leisure.

How terrible it would be if Rudy were now at the mill! But Rudy was not at the mill: no—it was much worse—he was close by outside. High words were spoken—angry words—there might be blows, there might even be murder!

Babette hastened to open her window, and, calling Rudy's name, bade him go away, adding that she could not permit him to remain there.

"You will not permit me to remain here!" he exclaimed. "Then this is an appointment! You are expecting some good friend—some one whom you prefer to me! Shame on you, Babette!"

"You are unbearable!" cried Babette; "I hate you!" and she burst into tears. "Go—go!"

"I have not deserved this," said Rudy, as he went away, his cheeks like fire, his heart like fire.

Babette threw herself weeping on her bed.

"And you can think ill of me, Rudy—of me who love you so dearly!"

She was angry—very angry, and that was good for her; she would otherwise have been deeply afflicted. As it was, she could fall asleep and slumber as only youth can do.

EVIL POWERS

Rudy left Bex, and took his way homeward, choosing the path up the mountains, with its cold fresh air, where, amidst the deep snow the Ice Maiden holds her sway. The largest trees with their thick foliage looked, so far below, as if they were but potato tops; the pines and the bushes became smaller; the Alpine roses were covered with snow, which lay in single patches, like linen on a bleach field. One solitary blue gentian stood in his path; he crushed it with the butt end of his gun. Higher up two chamois showed themselves. Rudy's eyes sparkled, and his thoughts took flight into another channel, but he was not near enough for a sure aim. Higher still he ascended, where only a few blades of grass grew amidst the blocks of ice. The chamois passed in peace over the fields of snow. Rudy pressed angrily on; thick mists gathered around him, and presently he found himself on the brink of the steep precipice of rock. The rain began to fall in torrents. He felt a

burning thirst; his head was hot, his limbs were cold. He sought for his hunting flask, but it was empty: he had not given it a thought when he rushed up the mountains. He had never been ill in his life, but now he experienced a sensation like illness. He was very tired, and felt a strong desire to throw himself down and sleep, but water was streaming all around him. He tried to arouse himself, but every object seemed to be dancing in a strange manner before his eyes.

Suddenly he beheld what he had never before seen there—a newly built low hut that leaned against the rock, and in the doorway stood a young girl. He thought she was the schoolmaster's daughter, Annette, whom he had once kissed in the dance, but she was not Annette; yet certainly he had seen her before, perhaps near Grindelwald the evening he was returning home from the shooting matches at Interlaken.

"How did you come here?" he asked.

"I am at home," she replied; "I am watching my flocks."

"Your flocks! Where do they find grass? Here there is nothing but snow and rocks."

"You know much about it, to be sure!" she said, laughing. "Behind this, a little way down, is a very nice piece of pasture land. My goats go there. I take good care of them; I never miss one; I keep what belongs to me."

"You are stouthearted," said Rudy.

"And so are you," she answered.

"If you have any milk, pray give me some; my thirst is almost intolerable."

"I have something better than milk," she replied; "you shall have that. Today some travelers came here with their guides; they left half a flask of wine behind them. They will not return for it, and I shall not drink it, so you shall have it."

She went for the wine, poured it into a wooden goblet, and gave it to Rudy.

"It is excellent," said he; "I never tasted any wine so warming, so reviving." And his eyes beamed with a wondrous brilliancy; there came a thrill of enjoyment, a glow over him, as if every sorrow and every vexation were vanishing from his mind; the free gushing feeling of man's nature awoke in him.

"But you are surely Annette, the schoolmaster's daughter," he exclaimed. "Give me a kiss."

"First give me the pretty ring you wear on your finger."

"My betrothal ring?"

"Yes, just it," said the girl; and replenishing the goblet with wine, she held it to his lips, and again he drank. A strange sense of pleasure seemed to rush into his very blood. The whole world was his, he seemed to fancy—why torment himself? Everything is given for our

gratification and enjoyment. The stream of life is the stream of happiness: flow on with it, let yourself be borne away on it—that is felicity. He gazed on the young girl. She was Annette, and yet *not* Annette; still less was she the magical phantom, as he had called *her* whom he had met near Grindelwald. The girl up here upon the mountain was fresh as the new-fallen snow, blooming like an Alpine rose, and lively as a kid; yet still formed from Adam's rib, a human being like Rudy himself. And he flung his arms around her, and gazed into her marvelously clear eyes. It was only for a moment—and in that moment—how shall it be expressed, how described in words? Was it the life of the spirit or the life of death which took possession of him? Was he raised higher, or was he sinking down into the deep icy abyss, deeper always deeper? He beheld the walls of ice shining like blue-green glass; endless crevasses yawned around him, and the waters dripped with a sound like the chime of bells—they were clear as a pearl lighted by pale blue flames. The Ice Maiden kissed him; it chilled him through his whole body. He uttered a cry of horror, broke resolutely away from her, stumbled and fell; all became dark to his eyes, but he opened them again. The evil powers had played their game.

The Alpine girl was gone, the sheltering hut was gone; water poured down the naked rocks, and snow lay all around. Rudy was shivering with cold, soaked through to the very skin, and his ring was gone—the betrothal ring Babette had given him. His gun lay on the snow close by him; he took it up, and tried to discharge it, but it missed fire. Damp clouds rested like thick masses of snow on the mountain clefts. Vertigo sat there, and glared upon her powerless prey, and beneath her rang through the deep crevasse a sound as if a mass of rock had fallen down, and was crushing and carrying away everything that opposed it in its furious descent.

At the miller's, Babette sat and wept. Six days had elapsed since Rudy had been there—he who was in the wrong, he who ought to ask her forgiveness, for she loved him with her whole heart.

AT THE MILLER'S HOUSE

"How frightfully foolish mankind are!" said the parlor Cat to the kitchen Cat. "It is all broken off now between Babette and Rudy. She sits and cries, and he thinks no more about her."

"I don't like that," said the kitchen Cat.

"Nor I either," replied the parlor Cat, "but I am not going to distress myself about it. Babette can take the red whiskers for her sweetheart. He has not been here since the evening he wanted to go on the roof."

The powers of evil carry on their game without and within us. Rudy

was aware of this, and he reflected on it. What had passed around him and within him up yonder on the mountain? Was it sin, or was it a fever dream? He had never known fever or illness before. While he blamed Babette, he took a retrospective glance within himself. He thought of the wild tornado in his heart, the hot whirlwind which had recently broken loose there. Could he confess all to Babette—every thought which in the hour of temptation, might have been carried out? He had lost her ring, and in this very loss she had won him back. Was any confession due from her to him? He felt as if his heart were breaking when his thoughts reverted to her—so many recollections crowded on his mind. He saw in her a laughing merry child, full of life; many an affectionate word she had addressed to him in the fullness of her heart came, like a ray of the sun, to gladden his soul, and soon it was all sunshine there for Babette.

She must, however, apologize to him, and she should do so.

He went to the miller's, and confession followed: it began with a kiss, and ended in Rudy's being the sinner. His great fault was that he could have doubted Babette's constancy—*that* was too bad of him! Such distrust, such impetuosity, might cause misery to them both. Yes, very true! and therefore Babette preached him a little sermon, which pleased herself vastly, and during which she looked very pretty. But, in one particular, Rudy was right—the godmother's nephew was a mere babbler. She would burn the book he had given her, and not keep the slightest article that would remind her of him.

"Well, it is all right again," said the parlor Cat. "Rudy has come back, they have made friends; and that is the greatest of pleasures, they say."

"I heard during the night," said the kitchen Cat, "the rats declaring that the greatest of pleasures was to eat candle-grease and to banquet on tainted meat. Which of them is to be believed, the lovers or the rats?"

"Neither of them," replied the parlor Cat. "It is always safest to believe no one."

The greatest happiness for Rudy and Babette was about to take place; the auspicious day, as it is called, was approaching—their wedding day!

But not in the church at Bex, not at the miller's house, was the wedding to be solemnized: the godmother had requested that the marriage should be celebrated at her abode, and that the ceremony should be performed in the pretty little church at Montreux. The miller was very urgent that this arrangement should be agreed to; he alone knew what the godmother intended to bestow on the young couple: they were to receive from her a wedding gift that was well worth such a small

concession to her wishes. The day was fixed; they were to go to Villeneuve the evening before, in order to proceed by an early steamer next morning to Montreux, that the godmother's daughters might adorn the bride.

"There ought to be a second day's wedding here in this house," said the parlor Cat; "else I am sure I would not give a mew for the whole affair."

"There is going to be a grand feast," replied the kitchen Cat. "Ducks and pigeons have been killed, and an entire deer hangs against the wall. My mouth waters when I look at all this. Tomorrow they commence their journey."

Yes, tomorrow! That evening Rudy and Babette sat as a betrothed couple for the last time at the miller's house. Outside was to be seen the Alpine glow; the evening bells were ringing; the daughters of the sun sang, "that which is best will be!"

NIGHT VISIONS

The sun had set; the clouds lay low in the valley of the Rhone; amidst the lofty mountains, the wind blew from the south—an African wind. Suddenly over the high Alps there arose a *jöhn* which swept the clouds asunder; and when the wind had lulled, all became for a moment perfectly still. The scattered clouds hung in fantastic forms amidst the wooded hills that skirted the rapid Rhone; they hung in forms like those of the marine animals of the antediluvian world, like eagles hovering in the air, and like frogs springing in a marsh; they sank down over the gushing river, and seemed to sail upon it, yet it was in the air they sailed. The current carried with it an uprooted pine tree; the water whirled in eddies around it. It was Vertigo and some of her sisters that were thus dancing in circles upon the foaming stream. The moon shone on the snow-capped hills, on the dark woods, on the curious white clouds—those appearances of the night that seem to be the spirits of nature. The mountain peasant saw them through his little window; they sailed outside in hosts before the Ice Maiden who came from her glacier palace. She sat on a frail skiff, the uprooted pine; the water from the glaciers bore her down to the river near the lake.

"The wedding guests are coming!" the air and the waters seemed to murmur and to sing.

Warnings without, warnings within! Babette had an extraordinary dream.

It seemed to her as if she were married to Rudy, and had been so for many years; that he was out chamois hunting, but she was at home; and that the young Englishman with the red whiskers was sitting with

her. His eyes were full of passion, his words had as it were a magic power in them; he held out his hand to her, and she felt compelled to go with him; they went forth from her home, and went always downward. And Babette felt as if there were a weight in her heart, which was becoming every moment heavier. She was committing a sin against Rudy—a sin against God. And suddenly she found herself forsaken; her dress was torn to pieces by thorns, her hair was gray. She looked upward in deep distress, and on the margin of a mountain ridge she beheld Rudy. She stretched her arms up toward him, but did not dare either to call to him or to pray; and neither would have been of any avail, for she soon perceived that it was not himself, but only his shooting jacket and cap, which were hanging on an alpenstock, as hunters sometimes place them to deceive the chamois. And in great misery Babette exclaimed—

“O that I had died on my wedding day—the day that was the happiest of my life! O Lord my God! that would have been a mercy—a blessing! That would have been the best thing that could have happened for me and Rudy. No one knows his future fate.” And in impious despair she cast herself down into the deep mountain chasm. A string seemed to have broken—a tone of sorrow was echoed around.

Babette awoke. Her vision was at an end, and what had happened in the dream world had partially vanished from her mind; but she knew that she had dreamt something frightful, and dreamt about the young Englishman, whom she had not seen or thought of for several months. Could he still be at Montreux? Would she see him at her wedding? A slight shade of displeasure stole around Babette’s pretty mouth, and for a moment her eyebrows knitted; but soon came a smile and a gay sparkle in her eye. The sun was shining so brightly without, and tomorrow was her and Rudy’s wedding day!

He was already in the parlor when she came down, and shortly after they set off for Villeneuve. The two were all happiness, and the miller likewise; he laughed and joked, and was in the highest spirits. A kind father, a good soul, he was.

“Now we have the house to ourselves,” said the parlor Cat.

THE CONCLUSION

It was not yet late in the day when the three happy travelers reached Villeneuve. After they had dined, the miller placed himself in a comfortable armchair with his pipe, intending, when he had done smoking, to take a short nap. The engaged couple went arm in arm out of the town, along the highroad, under the wooded hills that bordered the blue-green lake. The gray walls and heavy towers of the melancholy

looking Chillon were reflected in the clear water. The little island with the three acacias seemed quite near: it looked like a bouquet on the calm lake.

"How charming it must be over yonder!" exclaimed Babette, who felt again the greatest desire to go to it; and her wish might be gratified at once, for a boat was lying close to the bank, and the rope by which it was secured was easy to undo. There was no one to be seen of whom they could ask permission to take it, so they got into it without leave. Rudy knew very well how to row. The oars, like the fins of a fish, divided the mass of water that is so pliant and yet so potent, so strong to bear, so ready to swallow—gentle, smiling, smoothness itself, and yet terror-inspiring and mighty to destroy. A line of foam floated behind the boat, which, in a few minutes, arrived at the little island, where the happy pair immediately landed. There was just room for two to dance.

Rudy swung Babette three or four times round, and then they sat down on the little bench under the drooping acacia, and looked into each other's eyes, and held each other's hands, while around them streamed the last rays of the setting sun. The pine forests on the hills assumed a purplish red tint, resembling the hue of the blooming heather; and where the trees stopped, and the bare rocks stood forward, there was a rich luster, as if the mountain were transparent. The skies were brilliant with a crimson glow; the whole lake was covered with a tinge of pink, as if it had been thickly strewn with fresh blushing roses. As the shades of evening gathered around the snow-decked mountains of Savoy, they became a dark blue in color, but the highest peaks shone like red lava, and for a moment reflected their light on the mountain forms before these vast masses were lost in darkness. It was the Alpine glow, and Rudy and Babette thought they had never before beheld one so magnificent. The snow-bedecked Dent du Midi gleamed like the disk of the full moon when it shows itself above the horizon.

"O, what beauty! O, what pleasure!" exclaimed the lovers at the same time.

"Earth can bestow no more on me," said Rudy; "an evening like this is as a whole life. How often have I been sensible of my good fortune, as I am sensible of it now, and have thought that, if everything were to come at once to an end for me, I have lived a happy life! What a blessed world is this! One day ends, but another begins, and I always fancy the last is the brightest. Our Lord is infinitely good, Babette."

"I am so happy," she whispered.

"Earth can bestow no more on me," repeated Rudy. And the eve-

ning bells rang from the hills of Savoy and the mountains of Switzerland. In golden splendor stood forth toward the west the dark-blue Jura.

"God grant you all that is brightest and best!" exclaimed Babette fervently.

"He will," said Rudy; "tomorrow will fulfill that wish. Tomorrow you will be wholly mine—my own little charming wife."

"The boat!" cried Babette at that moment.

The boat which was to take them across again had got loose, and was drifting away from the island.

"I will bring it back," said Rudy, as he took off his coat and boots, and, springing into the lake, swam vigorously toward the boat.

Cold and deep was the clear bluish-green icy water from the glacier of the mountain. Rudy looked down into it—he took but a glance, yet he saw a gold ring trembling, glittering, and playing there. He thought of his lost betrothal ring, and the ring became larger and extended itself out into a sparkling circle, within which appeared the clear glacier; endless deep chasms yawned around it, and the water dropped tinkling like the sound of bells, and gleaming with pale-blue flames. In a second he beheld what it will take many words to describe. Young hunters and young girls, men and women who had been lost in the crevasses of the glacier, stood there, lifelike, with open eyes and smiling lips; and far beneath them arose from buried villages the church bells' chimes. Multitudes knelt under the vaulted roofs; ice blocks formed the organ pipes, and the mountain torrents made the music. The Ice Maiden sat on the clear transparent ground: she raised herself up toward Rudy, and kissed his feet, and there passed throughout his limbs a deathlike chill, an electric shock—ice and fire: it was impossible to distinguish one from the other in the quick touch.

"Mine! mine!" sounded around him and within him. "I kissed thee when thou wert little—kissed thee on thy mouth! Now I kiss thee on thy feet; now thou art wholly mine!"

And he disappeared in the clear blue water.

All was still around. The church bells had ceased to ring; their last tones had died away along with the last streak of red on the skies above.

"Thou art mine!" resounded in the depths below. "Thou art mine!" resounded from beyond the heights—from infinity!

Happy to pass from love to love, from earth to heaven!

A string seemed to have broken—a tone of sorrow was echoed around. The ice kiss of death had triumphed over the corruptible; the prelude to the drama of life had ended before the game itself had begun. All that seemed harsh, or sounded harshly, had subsided into harmony.

Do you call this a sad story?

Poor Babette! For her it was an hour of anguish. The boat drifted farther and farther away. No one on the mainland knew that the betrothed couple had gone over to the little island. The evening advanced, the clouds gathered, darkness came. Alone, despairing, wailing, she stood there. A furious storm came on; the lightning played over the Jura mountains, and over those of Switzerland and Savoy; from all sides flash followed upon flash, while the peals of thunder rolled in all directions for many minutes at a time. One moment the lightning was so vivid that all around became as bright as day—every single vine stem could be seen as distinctly as at the hour of noon—and in another moment the blackest darkness enveloped all. The lightning darted in zig-zags around the lake, and the roar of the thunder was echoed among the surrounding hills. On land the boats were drawn far up the beach, and all that were living had sought shelter. And now the rain poured down in torrents.

"Where can Rudy and Babette be in this awful weather?" said the miller.

Babette sat with folded hands, with her head in her lap, exhausted by grief, by screaming, by weeping.

"In the deep water," she sobbed to herself, "far down yonder, as under a glacier, *he* lies."

She remembered what Rudy had told her about his mother's death, and of his being saved himself when taken up apparently dead from the cleft in the glacier. "The Ice Maiden has him again!"

And there came a flash of lightning as dazzling as the sun's rays on the white snow. Babette looked up. The lake rose at that moment like a shining glacier: the Ice Maiden stood there, majestic, pale, glittering and at her feet lay Rudy's corpse.

"Mine!" she cried, and again all around was gloom, and darkness, and torrents of rain.

"Terrible!" groaned Babette. "Why should he die just when our happy day was so close at hand? Great God, enlighten my understanding—shed light upon my heart! I comprehend not Thy ways, determined by Thine almighty power and wisdom."

And God *did* shed light on her heart. A retrospective glance—a sense of grace—her dream of the preceding night—all crowded together on her mind. She remembered the words she had spoken—a wish for that which might be best for herself and Rudy.

"Woe is me! Was it the germ of sin in my heart? Was my dream a glimpse into the future, whose course had to be thus violently arrested to save me from guilt? Unhappy wretch that I am!"

She sat wailing there in the pitch-dark night. During the deep stillness seemed to ring around her Rudy's words—the last he had ever

spoken—"Earth can bestow no more on me!" Their sound was fraught with the fullness of joy; they were echoed amidst the depths of grief.

Some few years have elapsed since then. The lake smiles, its shores smile; the vines bear luscious grapes; steamboats with waving flags glide swiftly by; pleasure boats with their two unfurled sails skim like white butterflies over the watery mirror; the railway beyond Chillon is open, and it goes far into the valley of the Rhone. At every station strangers issue from it—they come with their red-bound guide books, and study therein what they ought to see. They visit Chillon, observe in the lake the little island with the three acacias, and read in the book about a bridal pair who, in the year 1856, rowed over to it one afternoon—of the bridegroom's death, and that not till the next morning were heard upon the shore the bride's despairing cries.

But the guide book gives no account of Babette's quiet life at her father's house—not at the mill (strangers now live there), but at a pretty spot whence from her window she can often look beyond the chestnut trees to the snowy hills over which Rudy loved to range; she can see at the hour of evening the Alpine glow—up where the children of the sun revel, and repeat their song about the wanderer whose cap the whirlwind carried off, but it could not take himself.

There is a rosy tint upon the mountain's snow—there is a rosy tint in every heart, which admits the thought, "God ordains what is best for us!" But it is not vouchsafed to us all so fully to feel this, as it was to Babette in her dream.

A PICTURE FROM THE CASTLE RAMPARTS

IT is autumn; we stand on the Castle Ramparts and look out across the sea with its many ships to the Swedish coast rising beyond, bright in the evening sunshine. Behind us the rampart descends abruptly; magnificent trees, whose yellow leaves are falling fast, grow below, and behind them are certain close-built, dull-looking houses with wooden palisades; a dreary walk has the sentinel who paces to and fro among them, but still drearier and darker must it be within those grated windows, for there dwell convict slaves, the worst of criminals.

A beam from the setting sun strays into the bare chamber, for the sun shines alike on the evil and on the good. The sullen, savage felon gazes gloomily on the cold sunbeam. A little bird flies upon the grating; his song, too, is for the evil as for the good. "Quirrevit!" his song is a

brief one, but he remains perched on the grating; he flaps his wings, plumes his feathers, one tiny feather falls off, the others he ruffles up round his neck. And the chained criminal looks on, and a softer expression passes over his hard, coarse features, a feeling he is scarcely conscious of springs up within his heart, a feeling in some way akin to the sunbeam that has darted through the trellis, and the fragrance of the violets that in the spring cluster so abundantly outside his prison. But now sounds the horn of some home-bound huntsman; clear, strong, and lively are the notes. Away from the grating flies the bird, from the bare wall fades away the sunbeam, and all is dark again within the chamber, dark again in the convict's heart. But, thank Heaven! the sun has shone therein, the bird's song has been heard, though but for one minute.

Die not away so soon, ye sweet, clear tones from the huntsman's horn! The evening is mild, the sea calm and smooth as a mirror.

A VISION OF THE LAST DAY

OF ALL the days of our life the greatest and most solemn is the day on which we die. Hast thou ever tried to realize that most sure, most portentous hour, the last hour we shall spend on earth?

There was a certain man, an upholder of truth and justice, a Christian man and orthodox, so the world esteemed him. And, in sooth, it may be that some good thing was found in him, since in sleep, amid the visions of the night, it pleased the Father of spirits to reveal him to himself, making manifest to him what he was in truth, namely, one of those who trust in themselves that they are righteous and despise others.

He went to rest, secure that his accounts were right with all men, that he had paid his dues and wrought good works that day; of the secret pride of his heart, of the harsh words that had passed his lips, he took no account at all. And so he slept, and in his sleep Death stood by his bedside, a glorious Angel, strong, spotless, beautiful, but unlike every other angel, stern, unsmiling, pitiless of aspect.

"Thine hour is come, and thou must follow me!" spake Death. And Death's cold finger touched the man's feet, whereupon they became like ice, then touched his forehead, then his heart. And the chain that bound the immortal soul to clay was riven asunder, and the soul was free to follow the Angel of Death.

But during those brief seconds, while yet that awful touch thrilled

through feet, and head, and heart, there passed over the dying man, as in great, heaving ocean waves, the recollection of all that he had wrought and felt in his whole life; just as one shuddering glance into a whirlpool suffices to reveal in thought rapid as lightning, the entire unfathomable depth; just as in one momentary glance at the starry heavens we can conceive the infinite multitude of that glorious host of unknown orbs.

In such a retrospect the terrified sinner shrinks back into himself, and finding there no stay by which to cling, must feel shrinking into infinite nothingness; while the devout soul raises its thoughts to the Almighty, yielding itself up to Him in childlike trust, and praying, "Thy will be done in me!"

But this man had not the childlike mind, neither did he tremble like the sinner; his thoughts were still the self-praising thoughts in which he had fallen asleep. His path, he believed, must lead straight heavenward, and Mercy, the promised Mercy, would open to him the gates.

And, in his dream, the Soul followed the Angel of Death, though not without first casting one wistful glance at the couch where lay, in its white shroud, the lifeless image of clay, still, as it were, bearing the impress of the soul's own individuality. And now they hovered through the air, now glided along the ground. Was it a vast, decorated hall they were passing through, or a forest? It seemed hard to tell; Nature, it appeared, was formally set out for show, as in the artificial old French gardens, and amid its strange, carefully arranged scenes, passed and repassed troops of men and women, all clad as for a masquerade.

"Such is human life!" said the Angel of Death.

The figures seemed more or less disguised; those who swept by in the glories of velvet and gold were not all among the noblest or most dignified looking, neither were all those who wore the garb of poverty insignificant or vulgar. It was a strange masquerade! But most strange it was to see how one and all carefully concealed under their clothing something they would not have others perceive, but in vain, for each was bent upon discovering his neighbor's secret, and they tore and snatched at one another till, now here, now there, some part of an animal was revealed. In one was found the grinning head of an ape, in another the cloven foot of a goat, in a third the poison fang of a snake, in a fourth the clammy fin of a fish.

All had in them some token of the animal—the animal which is fast rooted in human nature, and which here was seen struggling to burst forth. And, however closely a man might hold his garment over it, the others would never rest till they had rent the hiding veil, and all kept crying out, "Look here! look now! here he is! there she is!"—and every one mockingly laid bare his fellow's shame.

"And what was the animal in me?" inquired the disembodied Soul; and the Angel of Death pointed to a haughty form, around whose head shone a bright, wide-spread glory of rainbow-colored rays, but at whose heart might be seen lurking, half hidden, the feet of the peacock; the glory was, in fact, merely the peacock's gaudy tail.

And as they passed on, large, foul-looking birds shrieked out from the boughs of the trees; with clear, intelligible, though harsh, human voices they shrieked, "Thou that walkest with Death, dost remember me?" All the evil thoughts and desires that had nestled within him from his birth until his death now called after him, "Rememberest thou me?"

And the Soul shuddered, recognizing the voices; it could not deny knowledge of the evil thoughts and desires that were now rising up in witness against it.

"In our flesh, in our evil nature, dwelleth no good thing," cried the Soul; "but, at least, thoughts never with me ripened into actions; the world has not seen the evil fruit." And the Soul hurried on to get free from the accusing voices; but the great black fowls swept in circles round, and screamed out their scandalous words louder and louder, as though they would be heard all over the world. And the Soul fled from them like the hunted stag, and at every step stumbled against sharp flint stones that lay in the path. "How came these sharp stones here? They look like mere withered leaves lying on the ground."

"Every stone is for some incautious word thou hast spoken, which lay as a stumbling block in thy neighbor's path, which wounded thy neighbor's heart far more sorely and deeply than these sharp flints now wound thy feet."

"Alas! I never once thought of that," sighed the Soul.

And those words of the gospel rang through the air, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

"We have all sinned," said the Soul, recovering from its momentary self-abasement. "I have kept the Law and the Gospel, I have done what I could, I am not as others are!"

And in his dream this man now stood at the gates of heaven, and the Angel who guarded the entrance inquired, "Who art thou? Tell me thy faith, and show it to me in thy works."

"I have faithfully kept the Commandments, I have humbled myself in the eyes of the world, I have preserved myself free from the pollution of intercourse with sinners, I have hated and persecuted evil, and those who practice it, and I would do so still, yea, with fire and sword, had I the power."

"Then thou art one of Mohammed's followers?" said the Angel.

"I? a Mohammedan?—never!"

"He who strikes with the sword shall perish by the sword," thus

spake the Son; His religion thou knowest not. It may be that thou art one of the children of Israel, whose maxim is, 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,'—art thou such?"

"I am a Christian."

"I see it not in thy faith or in thine actions. The law of Christ is the law of forgiveness, love, and mercy."

"Mercy!" The gracious echo of that sweet word thrilled through infinite space, the gates of heaven opened, and the Soul hovered toward the realms of endless bliss.

But the flood of light that streamed forth from within was so dazzlingly bright, so transcendently white and pure, that the Soul shrank back as from a two-edged sword, and the hymns and harp tones of Angels mingled in such exquisite celestial harmony as the earthly mind has not power either to conceive or to endure. And the Soul trembled and bowed itself deeper and deeper, and the heavenly light penetrated it through and through, and it felt to the quick, as it had never truly felt before, the burden of its own pride, cruelty, and sin.

"What I have done of good in the world, that did I because I could not otherwise, but the evil that I did—that was of myself!"

This confession was wrung from him; more and more the man felt dazzled and overpowered by the pure light of heaven; he seemed falling into a measureless abyss, the abyss of his own nakedness and unworthiness. Shrunk into himself, humbled, cast out, unripe for the kingdom of heaven, shuddering at the thought of the just and holy God—hardly dared he to gasp out, "Mercy!"

And the face of the Angel at the portal was turned toward him in softening pity. "Mercy is for them who implore it, not claim it; there is Mercy also for thee. Turn thee, child of man, turn thee back the way thou camest to thy clayey tabernacle; in pity is it given thee to dwell in dust yet a little while. Be no longer righteous in thine own eyes, copy Him who with patience endured the contradiction of sinners, strive and pray that thou mayest become poor in spirit, and so mayest thou yet inherit the Kingdom."

"Holy, loving, glorious forever shalt thou be, O, erring human spirit!"—thus rang the chorus of Angels. And again overpowered by those transcendent melodies, dazzled and blinded by that excess of purest light, the Soul again shrank back into itself. It seemed to be falling an infinite depth; the celestial music grew fainter and fainter, till common earthly sights and sounds dispelled the vision. The rays of the early morning sun falling full on his face, the cheerful crow of the vigilant cock, called the sleeper up to pray.

Inexpressibly humbled, yet thankful, he arose and knelt beside his bed. "Thou, who hast shown me to myself, help me now, that I may not

only do justly, but love mercy, and walk humbly with my God. Thou, who hast convicted me of sin, now purify me, strengthen me, that, though ever unworthy of Thy presence, I may yet, supported by Thy Love, dare to ascend into Thine everlasting light!"

The Vision was his; be the lesson, the prayer, also ours.

THE GREENIES

A ROSE TREE stood in the window. Only a short time ago it was green and fresh, and now it looked sickly—no doubt it was in poor health. A whole regiment was quartered on it and was eating it up; but notwithstanding this greediness, the regiment was a very decent and respectable one. It wore bright green uniforms. I spoke to one of the "Greenies"; he was but three days old, and yet he was already a grandfather. Do you know what he said? It is all true—he spoke of himself and of the rest of the regiment. Listen!

"We are the most wonderful creatures in the world. We are engaged at a very early age, and immediately have the wedding. When the cold weather comes, we lay our eggs; the little ones lie snug and warm. The wisest of creatures, the ant (we have the greatest respect for him!) understands us. He appreciates us, you may be sure. He does not eat us up at once; he takes our eggs, lays them in the family ant hill, on the ground floor—lays them, labeled and numbered, side by side, layer on layer, so that each day a new one may creep out of the egg. Then he puts us in a stable, pinches our hind legs, and milks us till we die. He has given us the prettiest name—'Little milch-cow!'

"All creatures, who, like the ant, are gifted with common sense, call us so: it is only human beings who do not; they give us another name, and that we feel to be a great affront—great enough to embitter our whole life. Could you not write a protest against it for us? could you not rouse these human beings to a sense of the wrong they do us? They look at us so stupidly, at times with such envious eyes, just because we eat a rose leaf, while they eat every created thing, all that is green and grows. O, they give us the most humiliating name! I will not even mention it. Ugh! I feel it in my stomach; I cannot even pronounce it—at least not when I have my uniform on, and I always wear that.

"I was born on a rose leaf. And the whole regiment live on the rose tree. We live off it, in fact; but then it lives again in us, who belong to the higher order of created beings. The human beings do not like us; they come and murder us with soapsuds—it is a horrid drink! I seem

to smell it even now; it is dreadful to be washed when one was not made to be washed. Man! you who look at us with your severe soapsud eyes, think what our place in nature is: we are born on roses, we die in roses—our whole life is a poem. Do not give us the name which you yourself think most despicable, the name that I cannot bear to pronounce; call us the ants' milch-cows—the rose-tree regiment—the little green things."

And I—the man—stood looking at the tree, and at the little greenies—whose name I shall not mention, for I should not like to wound the feelings of one of the citizens of the rose tree, a large family with eggs and young ones—and at the soapsuds that I was going to wash them in, for I had come with soap and water, and murderous intentions; but now I will use it for soap bubbles. Look! how beautiful! perhaps there lies a fairy tale in each, and the bubble grows so large and radiant, and it looks as if there were a pearl lying inside of it!

The bubble swayed and swung, and flew to the door and then burst; but the door opened wide, and there stood Dame Fairy Tale herself! and now she will tell you better than I can about—I won't say the name—the little green things.

"Tree-lice!" said Dame Fairy Tale. "One must call things by their right names; and if one may not do so always, one must at least have the privilege of doing so in fairy tales!"

WHAT ONE CAN INVENT!

THERE WAS once a young man who wanted to become a poet. He wanted to be a poet by the next Easter, that he might marry and live by poetizing, and that, he knew, consisted merely in a knack of inventing, but then he never could invent! He was quite sure that he had been born too late; every subject had been taken before he came into the world, and there was nothing left for him to write about!

"What happy mortals were those who were born a thousand years ago," he sighed, "for then it was an easy matter to become immortal! Even those who were born but a hundred years ago were enviable; even at that time there was still something left to poetize about. But now all subjects are worn threadbare, and there is no use in my trying to write the nap on again!"

He thought and thought about it, till he grew quite thin and forlorn, poor fellow. No doctor could help him; there was but one who would be able to find the right remedy for him, and that was that wonderfully clever little old woman who lived in the little hut by the turnpike

gate, that she opened and shut for all who passed that way. But she was wise and learned, and could open far more than the gate; she was much wiser than the doctor who drives in his carriage, and pays title taxes.

"I must go to her," said the young man. Her home was small and tidy, but tiresome to look at—not a tree, not a flower, grew anywhere near it. There was a beehive at the door—very useful! There was a little potato field—very useful! and a ditch with a blackthorn bush that had flowered, and was bearing fruit—berries that draw your mouth together if you eat of them before the frost has nipped them.

"What a picture all this is of our unpoetic time," thought the young man. At least here was a thought, a grain of gold dust that he found at the door of the little old woman's cottage.

"Write that thought down," she said. "Crumbs are bread, too. I know why you have come here; you cannot invent, and yet you want to be a poet by next Easter!"

"Everything has been written about," he sighed; "our time is not as the olden time."

"No, it is not," said the old woman. "In the olden time such as I, who knew many weighty secrets, and how to cure by the help of wonderful herbs, were burned alive; and in the olden time, the poets went about with empty stomachs and out at elbows. Ours is a very good time, the very best, much better than the olden time; but your want of invention all lies in your having no eyes to see with, and no ears to hear, and you do not say your prayers of an evening. There are any amount of things all around you that one might poetize and write about, when one knows *how* to write stories. You can find it in the earth where it grows and sprouts; you can dip into the running or the stagnant water, and you will find it there; but first of all, you must understand the way of doing it—must know how to catch a ray of sunshine. Now, just try my spectacles, put my ear trumpet to your ear, say your prayers, and do, for once, leave off thinking of yourself."

That last request was almost more than he could fulfill—more than even such a wonderful old woman ought to ask.

He got the spectacles and the ear trumpet, and was put out into the middle of the potato field; then she gave him a huge potato in his hand; presently he seemed to hear sounds in the potato, then came a song with words, a "story of everyday life," in ten volumes—but ten hills will do as well.

What was it the potato sang? It sang about itself and its ancestors, the arrival of the potato in Europe, and all it had had to suffer from suspicion and ill will before its value was recognized—before it was felt to be a much greater blessing than would be a lump of gold.

"We were distributed, by order of the King, at the courthouse in

every town; and there was issued a circular, setting forth our value and great merits, but no one believed it; they had not even the slightest idea how to plant us. One man dug a hole and threw his whole bushel of potatoes into it; another stuck them into the ground, one here, another there, and then waited for them to grow, and expected them to shoot up like trees that would bear potatoes, just as apple trees bear apples. There came buds, and stems, and flowers, and watery fruit, but it all withered away, and no one thought of the real blessing, the potato, that lay hidden under it all, in the ground. Yes, we have suffered much and been tried—that is, our forefathers have, but it all comes right in the end. Now you know our story.”

“That’s enough,” said the old woman; “now look at the blackthorn.”

“We, too,” said the blackthorn, “have many relations in the land where the potatoes came from. A party of bold Norwegians from Norway steered their course westward through storm and fog till they came to an unknown country, where, under the ice and snow, they found herbs and grass, and bushes with blue-black berries of the vine—the blackthorn it was, whose berries ripen with the frost, and so do we. And that country they call ‘Vineland,’ and ‘Greenland,’ and ‘Blackthorn Land.’”

“Why, that is quite a romantic story,” said the young man.

“Now just follow me,” said the little old woman, as she led him to the beehive. What life and movement there was! Then he looked in; there were bees standing in all the corridors, moving their wings like fans, so that there might be plenty of fresh air all through that large honey factory; that was their department. Then there were bees coming in from outside, from the sunshine and the flowers; they had been born with baskets on their legs; they brought the dust of the flowers and emptied it out of their little leg baskets; then it was sorted and worked up into honey and wax. Some came, some went; the queen of the hive wanted to fly, but when she flies, then all the others must fly too, and the right time for that had not yet come; but fly she would, and then to prevent her doing so, they bit her majesty’s wings off—so that she was obliged to stay where she was.

“Now get up on the side of the ditch, where you can see all the town folk going past,” said the little old woman.

“Goodness! what an endless number of people,” said the young man. “One story after another! I seem to hear such buzzing and singing, and now it all grows quite confused! I feel quite dizzy—I shall fall!”

“No, don’t,” said the old woman—“don’t fall backward; just go forward, right into the crowd of people; have eyes for all you see there, ears for all you hear, and above all, have a heart in it all! and before long you will be able to *invent*, and have thoughts for writing down—

but before you go you must give me back my spectacles and my ear trumpet," and then she took both.

"Now I see nothing more," said the young man. "I do not even hear anything."

"In that case, it is quite impossible for you to be a poet by next Easter," said the old woman.

"But *when* shall I be a poet?" asked he.

"Neither by Easter nor by Whitsuntide! You have no knack at inventing," said she.

"But how then must I do, to get my living as by poetizing?"

"That I will tell you: write about those who have written. To hit their writings is to hit them. Don't let yourself be frightened; the more you do of such writing, the more you will earn, and you and your wife will be able to eat cake every day."

"What a trick *she* has at inventing," thought the young man, when he had thanked the old woman and bidden her good-by. And he did as she had told him. Finding he could not be a poet himself, invent, and have bright ideas that people would talk of, he took to handling—and rather roughly—all those that were poets.

All this the little old woman has told me; she knows what one can invent!

IT'S PERFECTLY TRUE!

THAT's a terrible thing!" said a Hen; and she said it in a quarter of the town where the occurrence had not happened. "That's a terrible affair in the poultry house. I cannot sleep alone tonight! It is quite fortunate that there are many of us on the roost together!" And she told a tale, at which the feathers of the other birds stood on end, and the cock's comb fell down flat. It's perfectly true!

But we will begin at the beginning; and the beginning begins in a poultry house in another part of the town. The sun went down, and the fowls jumped up on their perch to roost. There was a Hen, with white feathers and short legs, who laid her right number of eggs, and was a respectable hen in every way; as she flew up on to the roost she pecked herself with her beak, and a little feather fell out.

"There it goes!" said she; "the more I peck myself the handsomer I grow!" And she said it quite merrily, for she was a joker among the hens, though, as I have said, she was very respectable; and then she went to sleep.

It was dark all around; hen sat by hen, but the one that sat next to the merry Hen did not sleep: she heard and she didn't hear, as one should do in this world if one wishes to live in quiet; but she could not refrain from telling it to her next neighbor.

"Did you hear what was said here just now? I name no names; but here is a hen who wants to peck her feathers out to look well. If I were a cock I should despise her."

And just above the hens sat the Owl, with her husband and her little owlets; the family had sharp ears, and they all heard every word that the neighboring Hen had spoken, and they rolled their eyes, and the Mother-Owl clapped her wings and said,

"Don't listen to it! But I suppose you heard what was said there? I heard it with my own ears, and one must hear much before one's ears fall off. There is one among the fowls who has so completely forgotten what is becoming conduct in a hen that she pulls out all her feathers, and then lets the cock see her."

"*Prenez garde aux enfants*," said the Father-Owl. "That's not fit for the children to hear."

"I'll tell it to the neighbor owl; she's a very proper owl to associate with." And she flew away.

"Hoo! hoo! to-whoo!" they both screeched in front of the neighbor's dovecot to the doves within. "Have you heard it? Have you heard it? Hoo! hoo! there's a hen who has pulled out all her feathers for the sake of the cock. She'll die with cold, if she's not dead already."

"Coo! coo! Where, where?" cried the Pigeons.

"In the neighbor's poultry yard. I've as good as seen it myself. It's hardly proper to repeat the story, but it's quite true!"

"Believe it! believe every single word of it!" cooed the Pigeons, and they cooed down into their own poultry yard. "There's a hen, and some say that there are two of them that have plucked out all their feathers, that they may not look like the rest, and that they may attract the cock's attention. That's a bold game, for one may catch cold and die of a fever, and they are both dead."

"Wake up! Wake up!" crowed the Cock, and he flew up on to the plank; his eyes were still very heavy with sleep, but yet he crowed. "Three hens have died of an unfortunate attachment to a cock. They have plucked out all their feathers. That's a terrible story. I won't keep it to myself; let it travel farther."

"Let it travel farther!" piped the Bats; and the fowls clucked and the cocks crowed, "Let it go farther! let it go farther!" And so the story traveled from poultry yard to poultry yard, and at last came back to the place from which it had gone forth.

"Five fowls," it was told, "have plucked out all their feathers to show

which of them had become thinnest out of love to the cock; and then they have pecked each other, and fallen down dead, to the shame and disgrace of their families, and to the great loss of the proprietor."

And the Hen who had lost the little loose feather, of course did not know her own story again; and as she was a very respectable Hen, she said—

"I despise those fowls; but there are many of that sort. One ought not to hush up such a thing, and I shall do what I can that the story may get into the papers, and then it will be spread over all the country, and that will serve those fowls right, and their families too."

It was printed in the newspaper; and it's perfectly true—one little feather can easily become five hens.

THERE'S A DIFFERENCE

IT WAS in the month of May; the wind was still cold, but trees and bushes, fields, and meadows, all proclaimed that spring was come. Flowers sprang forth everywhere, even the hedges were full of them, alive with them, one might say: it seemed as though they were the language wherein Spring announced herself, every single bright blossom a gladsome word of greeting. But the loveliest thing in the hedge was a little apple tree, and in that tree there was one bough especially fresh and blooming, completely weighed down by its wealth of delicate rosy buds, just ready to open. This bough was so lovely, it could not help knowing it, and therefore it was not one bit surprised when a grand carriage, passing along the road, stopped in front of it, and a young countess sitting in the carriage declared that of all the sweet, bright things of spring, that apple bough was the sweetest and brightest of all. And the apple bough was broken off, and the young countess held it in her own dainty hand, shading it from the sun with her silk parasol; and then they drove on to her home, a stately castle, full of lofty walls and decorated saloons; where gauzy white curtains fluttered at the open windows, and transparent vases stood full of beautiful flowers, and in one of these, which was carved as it were out of new-fallen snow, the apple bough was placed, among fresh, light-green beech leaves, and a pretty sight it was!

And so it came to pass that the apple bough grew proud, quite like a human being.

All sorts of people passed through the rooms, and expressed their admiration diversely; some said too much, some said too little, some said

nothing at all; and the apple bough began to understand that there is a difference between human beings as between vegetables. "Some are for use, some are for ornament, and some could be dispensed with altogether," thought the apple bough. And as his position at the open window commanded a view over gardens and meadows below, he could look down upon all sorts of flowers and plants, consider, and draw distinctions between them. They stood beneath him all, some rich, some poor, some too poor.

"Miserable, rejected herbs!" snorted the apple bough. "It is right and just that a distinction should be made—and yet how unhappy they must feel, if indeed that sort of creature is capable of feeling, like me and my equals; there is indeed a difference, but it must be made, else all would be treated as though they were alike." And the apple bough looked down with especial compassion upon one kind of flowers that grew in great multitudes upon the meadows and ditches; no one gathered them for bouquets—they were too common, they could be found springing up even between the paving stones, they shot up everywhere, the rankest, most worthless of weeds: they were dandelions, but the lower classes in Denmark have given them the name of "Milk-pails."

"Poor despised outcasts!" went on the apple bough; "you cannot help being what you are, so common! and with such a vulgar name! But it is with vegetables as with men, there must be a difference."

"A difference?" repeated the Sunbeam, as it kissed the blossoming apple bough, and then flew on to kiss also the golden "Milk-pails" out in the fields. And the Sunbeam's sisters all did the same, kissing all the flowers equally, poor as well as rich.

Now the apple bough had never thought about our Lord's infinite love for all that lives and moves in Him, had never thought how much that is good and beautiful can lie hidden, but not forgotten. The apple bough had lived with human beings, and grown like them in this.

But the glorious Sunbeam knew better. "You are neither clear nor farsighted! What is this outcast herb that you are pitying so much?"

"The Milk-pails down there," replied the apple bough; "they are never tied up in bouquets, they are trodden under foot, there are too many of them; and when they run to seed they fly about in small bits of wool, and hang upon people's clothes. Weeds! weeds! but they must be as they are. I am really and truly grateful that I am not as one of them."

And now a whole troop of children roamed over the meadow, the youngest of them so tiny that he had to be carried by the others; and as he was now set down in the grass among the golden blossoms, he laughed for joy, kicked about with his short legs, rolled over and over, and plucked none but the yellow dandelions, which he kissed in his

innocent delight. The bigger children busied themselves in breaking the flowers of the dandelions off from their hollow stalks, and joining these stalks into chains, first one for a necklace, then a longer chain to hang across the shoulders and round the waist, and last, a third for a circlet round the head; very soon they stood arrayed in splendid green chains. But the biggest of all the children carefully gathered the stalks bearing crowns of seed—that loose, aerial, woolly blossom, that wonderfully perfect ball of dainty white plumes; they held the white ball to their lips, trying to blow away all the white feathers with one puff of breath; whoever could do that would get new clothes before the year was out—so granny had told them. The poor despised herb was held as a prophet by this generation.

“Do you see now?” asked the Sunbeam; “don’t you see its beauty, its power?”

“Yes, for children,” replied the apple bough.

Presently came into the meadow an old woman. She stooped down, and began digging for the dandelion roots with a blunt knife that had lost its handle. Some of the roots she would roast instead of coffee berries, others she would sell to the apothecary, who valued them as drugs.

“But beauty is something higher,” protested the apple bough. “Only the chosen few can be admitted into the kingdom of the beautiful; there is a difference among plants as among men.”

Then the Sunbeam spoke of the infinite love of the Creator for all His creatures, for all that has life, and His providence watching equally over all.

“Well, that is your opinion,” replied the apple bough.

Some people now came into the room, among them the young countess who had placed the apple bough in the white vase by the window, and she carried in her hand something that was concealed by three or four large leaves held round it, lest a draught of air should injure it. Was it a flower? it was carried so carefully, more tenderly than the apple bough had been, when brought to the castle. Very gently the large leaves were removed, and behold the delicate globe of starry seeds borne by the despised dandelion plant! This it was which she had plucked so cautiously, carried so tenderly, lest one only of the dainty feathered arrows that help to round its globe-like form and sit so lightly, should be blown away. But it was quite perfect, not one seed was lost, and she admired so much the beautiful form, the airy lightness, the wondrous mechanism of a thing destined to be so soon scattered by the wind.

“Only see how wonderfully beautiful our Lord has made it,” she said. “I will put it in a picture together with the apple bough: that is very lovely too; but this poor little weed is equally lovely, only in another

way. Very different are they, and yet both are children in the kingdom of the beautiful."

And the Sunbeam kissed the poor weed, and then kissed the blossoming apple bough, whose delicate petal seemed to blush into a brighter red.

THE SWANS' NEST

BETWEEN the Baltic and the North Sea lies an old Swans' Nest—it is called Denmark; in it have been born, and will be born hereafter, Swans whose names shall never die.

In the olden time, a flock of Swans flew thence over the Alps to Milan's lovely green plains. There they lighted down and dwelt, for right pleasant was it there to dwell. These Swans were called Lombards.

Another flock, with bright shining plumage, and clear, truthful eyes, lighted down at Byzantium, nestled round the Emperor's throne, and spread out their broad white wings as shields to protect him. These were known as Varangians.

From the coasts of France arose a cry of anguish and terror—terror at the bloody Swans who, with fire under their wings, flew thither from the North. Loud was the prayer of village and town, "God save us from the wild Normans!"

On England's fresh meadow turf, near the shore, wearing a triple crown on his kingly head, his golden scepter stretching far over the land, stood the royal Swan, Canute the Dane.

And on Pomerania's shores the heathens bowed the knee, for thither, too, with drawn swords, and bearing the standard of the cross, had flown the Danish Swans.

"But this was in the days of old."

In times nearer our own, then, have mighty Swans been seen to fly out from the Nest. A flash of lightning cleft the air—lightning that shone over all Europe—for a Swan had flapped his strong wings and scattered the twilight mist, and the starry heavens became more visible—were brought, as it were, nearer the earth. The Swan's name was Tycho Brahe.

"Yes, just that once," it will be said; "but now, in our own generation?"

Well, in our own generation we have beheld Swans soaring in a high and glorious flight.

One we saw gently sweep his wings over the golden chords of the harp, whereupon sweet music thrilled through the northern lands.

the wild Norwegian mountains lifted their proud crests higher in the full sunlight of the olden time, pine and birch bowed their heads and rustled their leaves, the "Gods of the North"—the heroes and noble women of Scandinavian history—lived and breathed again, their tall, stately figures standing out from the dark background of deep forests.

A second Swan we saw strike his pinions upon the hard marble rock till it cleft asunder, and new forms of beauty, hitherto shut up in the stone, were revealed to the light of day, and the nations of Europe gazed in wonder and admiration at the glorious statuary.

A third Swan we have seen weaving threads of thoughts that spun and spread around the earth, so that words can fly with lightning speed from land to land.

Dear to the protecting heavens above is the old Swans' Nest between the Baltic and the North Sea. Let mighty birds of prey, if they will, speed thither to tear it down. It shall not be! Even the unfledged, unplumed young ones will press forward to the margin of the Nest—we have seen it—will fight desperately with beak and claw, will offer their bleeding breast in defense of their home.

Centuries will pass away, and Swans will still fly forth from the Nest, and make themselves seen and heard far over the world; long will it be before the time shall come when in sad truth it may be said, "Behold the last Swan! Listen to the last sweet song from the Swans' Nest!"

THE COMET

NOW THE comet came with its shining nucleus and its nebulous tail. At the great castle they gazed at it, and from the poor shanty; the crowd in the street stared at it, and the solitary man, that went his way over the pathless heath. Every one had his own thoughts. "Come and look at the vault of heaven: come out and look at the wonderful sight," they cried, and all hastened to look. But inside the room there sat yet a little boy and his mother. The tallow candle was burning, and the mother thought that there was a moth in the light; the tallow formed in ragged edges around the candle, and ran down the sides; this, she believed, betokened that her son should die very soon—the shining little moth was turning toward him.

This was an old superstition in which she believed. The little boy was destined to live many years here on earth, and, indeed, lived to see the comet again, when it returned sixty years after.

The boy did not see the candlemoth in the light, and thought not of the comet, which then, for the first time in his life, looked brightly down

from the skies. He sat quietly with an earthen dish before him; the dish being filled with soap water, in which he dipped the head of a clay pipe, and then put the stem in his mouth, and made soap bubbles, big and small. They quivered and fluttered in their beautiful colors; they changed from yellow to red, from red to purple and blue; then they colored green, like the leaves when the sun is shining through them. "May God give thee many years to live here on earth, as many as the bubbles thou art blowing."

"So many, so many!" cried the little fellow. "I can never blow all the soap water into bubbles. There flies one year, there flies another!" exclaimed he, when a new bubble broke loose from the pipe and flew off. Some of them flew into his eyes: they burned and smarted, and caused tears to flow. In every bubble he saw a picture of the future, glimmering and glittering.

"This is the time to see the comet!" exclaimed the neighbors; "come out of doors, and don't sit in the room."

And the mother took the boy by the hand; he had to lay the clay pipe aside, and leave his play with the soap bubbles; the comet was there.

And the boy saw the brilliant fireball, and the shining tail. Some said it was three yards long, others insisted it was several millions of yards long—only a slight difference.

Most of the people who had said that, were dead and gone when the comet came again; but the little fellow, toward whom the candlemoth had been turned, of whom the mother thought, "He will die soon," he still lived, had become old and white-haired. "White hairs are the flower of old age," says the proverb; and he had a good many of such flowers. He was now an old schoolmaster. The schoolchildren said that he was very wise, and knew so very much; he knew history, and geography, and all that was known about heaven and its stars.

"Everything comes again," said he; "only pay attention to persons and events, and you will learn that they always return; there may be a hundred years between, or many hundred years, but then we shall have the same persons again, only in another coat, and in another country." And the schoolmaster told them about William Tell, who was compelled to shoot an apple from his son's head; but before he shot the arrow, he hid another one in his bosom, to shoot into the breast of the wicked Gesler. This took place in Switzerland. But many years before that happened, the same event occurred in Denmark with Walraloke; he was also obliged to shoot an apple from his son's head, and he also hid an arrow in his bosom, to avenge the cruelty. And several thousand years before that, the same story was written down in Egypt. This is a story, and a true one; it came again, and will come again, like the comet, that returns, "flies away through space, stays away, but returns." And

he spoke of the comet that was expected, the same comet that he had seen when yet a boy.

The schoolmaster knew what took place in the skies, but he did not therefore forget history and geography. His garden was laid out in the shape of a map of Denmark. Here were herbs and flowers, which belong to different parts of the land.

"Fetch me herbs," said he, and they went to the bed that represented Laaland; "fetch me buckwheat," and they went to Langeland. The beautiful blue gentian was found in Skagen. The shining Christ-thorn, at Silkeborg. Towns and cities were marked with images. Here stood St. Knud, with the dragon, which meant Odense; Absalon, with the Bishop's staff, meant Sorø. The old boat with the oars was a sign that there stood Aarhus. From the schoolmaster's garden you could learn the geography of Denmark; but one had to be instructed by him first, and that was a great pleasure.

Now the comet was expected again, and of that he spoke; and he related what people had said in the olden times, when it appeared last; they had said that a comet year was a good wine year, and that one could mix water with that wine, without its being detected. Therefore the merchants thought so much of a comet year.

The sky was overcast for two weeks, they could not see the comet, and yet it was there. The old schoolmaster sat in his little chamber adjoining the schoolroom. The old Bornholm clock of his grandfather's time stood in the corner; the heavy lead weights did neither ascend nor descend, the pendulum did not move. The little cuckoo, that used to come forward in past times to cuckoo the passing hours, had for many years ceased to do his duty. Everything was dumb and silent; the clock was out of order.

But the old clavichord near by, made in his father's time, had yet a spark of life left. The strings could yet ring; true, they were a little hoarse, but they could ring the melodies of a whole lifetime. With these, the old man remembered so much, both joyful and sorrowful, that had happened in the long series of years that had passed by since he, a little boy, saw the comet; and now, when that comet had come again, he remembered what his mother had said about the moth in the light; he remembered the beautiful soap bubbles that he blew, each of them representing a year of his life, as he had said, shining and sparkling in wonderful hues. He saw in them all his pleasures and sorrows, everything beautiful and sorrowful. He saw the child and its plays, the youth and his fancies, the whole world, in wavy brightness, opening before his gazing eyes; and in that sunlight he saw his future grow. These were the bubbles of coming time; now, an old man, he heard from the clavichord's strings the melodies of passing time, mind's bubbles, with memory's variegated colors. And he heard his nurse's knitting song—

*For sure no Amazone
Did ever stockings knit.*

And then the strings sang the song the old papa of the house was wont to sing to him, when a child—

*In truth full many dangers
Will grow up here below,
For him, that yet is young,
And doth not fully know.*

Now the melodies of the first ball were ringing the minuet and moli-nasky; then the melancholy notes of the flute passed by: bubble after bubble they hurried on, very much like those that he blew with soap water, when a little boy.

His eyes were turned toward the window: a cloud in the sky was gliding by, and, as it passed, revealed the comet to his gaze, the sparkling nucleus, the shining tail.

It seemed as if it had been only the evening of yesterday that he had seen that comet, and yet a whole eventful lifetime lay between that evening and this. Then he was a child, and looked through the bubbles into the future; now the bubbles pointed back in the past.

Once more he had a child's feeling and a child's trust; his eyes sparkled, and his hands sank down upon the keys. There came a sound as of the breaking of a string.

"Come out and see!" shouted the neighbors; "the comet is here, and the sky is so clear; come out and look!"

The old schoolmaster answered not; he had gone where he should see more clearly: his soul was upon a journey far greater than the comet's, and into a wider space than the comet has to fly through.

And the comet was again seen from the rich castle, and from the poor shanty; the crowd in the street gazed at it, and the solitary man that walked through the pathless heath. But the schoolmaster's soul was seen by God, and the dear ones that had preceded, and whom he so much longed for.

'GOOD-FOR-NOTHING'

THE SHERIFF stood at the open window; he wore ruffles, and a dainty breastpin decorated the front of his shirt; he was neatly shaven, and a tiny little strip of sticking plaster covered the little cut he had given himself during the process. "Well, my little man?" quoth he.

The "little man" was no other than the laundress' son, who respectfully took off his cap in passing. His cap was broken in the rim, and adapted to be put into the pocket on occasion; his clothes were poor, but clean, and very neatly mended, and he wore heavy wooden shoes. He stood still when the sheriff spoke, as respectfully as though he stood before the king.

"Ah, you're a good boy, a well-behaved boy!" said the sheriff. "And so your mother is washing down at the river; *she* isn't good for much. And you're going to her, I see. Ah, poor child!—well, you may go."

And the boy passed on, still holding his cap in his hand, while the wind tossed to and fro his waves of yellow hair. He went through the street, down a little alley to the brook, where his mother stood in the water, at her washing stool, beating the heavy linen. The water mill's sluices were opened, and the current was strong; the washing stool was nearly carried away by it, and the laundress had hard work to strive against it.

"I am very near taking a voyage," she said, "and it is so cold out in the water: for six hours have I been standing here. Have you anything for me?"—and the boy drew forth a phial, which his mother put to her lips. "Ah, that is as good as warm meat, and it is not so dear. O, the water is so cold—but if my strength will but last me out to bring you up honestly, my sweet child!"

At that moment approached an elderly woman, poorly clad, blind of one eye, lame on one leg, and with her hair brushed into one large curl to hide the blind eye—but in vain, the defect was only the more conspicuous. This was "Lame Maren," as the neighbors called her, a friend of the washerwoman's. "Poor thing, slaving and toiling away in the cold water! it is hard that you should be called names"—for Maren had overheard the sheriff speaking to the child about his own mother—"hard that your boy should be told you are good-for-nothing."

"What! did the sheriff really say so, child?" said the laundress, and her lips quivered. "So you have a mother who is good-for-nothing! Perhaps he is right, only he should not say so to the child—but I must not complain, for good things have come to me from that house."

"Why yes, you were in service there once, when the sheriff's parents were alive, many years since. There is a grand dinner at the sheriff's today," went on Maren: "it would have been put off, though, had not everything been prepared. I heard it from the porter. News came in a letter, an hour ago, that the sheriff's younger brother, at Copenhagen, is dead."

"Dead!" repeated the laundress, and she turned as white as a corpse.

"What do you care about it?" said Maren. "To be sure, you must have known him, since you served in the house."

"Is he dead? he was the best, the kindest of creatures! indeed, there

are not many like him," and the tears rolled down her cheeks. "O, the world is turning round, I feel so ill!" and she clung to the washing stool for support.

"You are ill, indeed!" cried Maren. "Take care, the stool will overturn. I had better get you home at once."

"But the linen?"

"I will look after that—only lean on me. The boy can stay here and watch it till I come back and wash what is left; it is not much."

The poor laundress' limbs trembled under her. "I have stood too long in the cold water; I have had no food since yesterday. O, my poor child!" and she wept.

The boy cried too, as he sat alone beside the brook, watching the wet linen. Slowly the two women made their way up the little alley and through the street, past the sheriff's house. Just as she reached her humble home, the laundress fell down on the paving stones, fainting. She was carried upstairs and put to bed. Kind Maren hastened to prepare a cup of warm ale—that was the best medicine in this case, she thought—and then went back to the brook and did the best she could with the linen.

In the evening she was again in the laundress' miserable room. She had begged from the sheriff's cook a few roasted potatoes and a little bit of bacon, for the sick woman. Maren and the boy feasted upon these, but the patient was satisfied with the smell of them—that, she declared, was very nourishing.

Supper over, the boy went to bed, lying crosswise at his mother's feet, with a coverlet made of old carpet ends, blue and red, sewed together.

The laundress now felt a little better; the warm ale had strengthened her, the smell of the meat done her good.

"Now, you good soul," said she to Maren, "I will tell you all about it, while the boy is asleep. That he is already; look at him, how sweetly he looks with his eyes closed; he little thinks how his mother has suffered. May he never feel the like! Well, I was in service with the sheriff's parents when their youngest son, the student, came home; I was a wild young thing then, but honest—that I must say for myself. And the student was so pleasant and merry, a better youth never lived. He was a son of the house; I only a servant, but we became sweethearts—all in honor and honesty—and he told his mother that he loved me; she was like an angel in his eyes, so wise, kind, and loving! And he went away, but his gold ring of betrothal was on my finger. When he was really gone, my mistress called me in to speak to her; so grave, yet so kind she looked, so wisely she spoke, like an angel, indeed. She showed me what a gulf of difference in tastes, habits, and mind lay between her son and me. 'He sees you now to be good-hearted and pretty, but will

you always be the same in his eyes? You have not been educated as he has been; intellectually you cannot rise to his level. I honor the poor,' she continued, 'and I know that in the kingdom of heaven many a poor man will sit in a higher seat than the rich; but that is no reason for breaking the ranks in this world, and you two, left to yourselves, would drive your carriage full tilt against all obstacles till it toppled over with you both. I know that a good honest handicraftsman, Erik, the glovemaker, has been your suitor; he is a widower without children, he is well off; think whether you cannot be content with him.' Every word my mistress spoke went like a knife through my heart, but I knew she was right; I kissed her hand, and shed such bitter tears! But bitterer tears still came when I went into my chamber and lay upon my bed. O, the long, dreary night that followed! Our Lord alone knows what I suffered. Not till I went to church on Sunday did a light break upon my darkness. It seemed providential that as I came out of church I met Erik the glovemaker. There were no more doubts in my mind; he was a good man, and of my own rank. I went straight to him, took his hand, and asked, 'Are you still in the same mind toward me?'—'Yes, and I shall never be otherwise minded,' he replied. 'Do you care to have a girl who likes and honors you, but does not love you?'—'I believe love will come,' he said, and so he took my hand. I went home to my mistress; the gold ring that her son had given me, that I wore all day next my heart, and on my finger at night in bed, I now drew forth; I kissed it till my mouth bled, I gave it to my mistress, and said that next week the banns would be read for me and the glovemaker. My mistress took me in her arms and kissed me; she did not tell me I was good-for-nothing; I was good for something then, it seems, before I had known so much trouble. The wedding was at Candlemastide, and our first year all went well; my husband had apprentices, and you, Maren, helped me in the housework."

"O, and you were such a good mistress!" exclaimed Maren. "Never shall I forget how kind you and your husband were to me."

"Ah, you were with us during our good times! We had no children then. The student I never saw again—yes, once I saw him, but he did not see me. He came to his mother's funeral; I saw him standing by her grave, looking so sad, so ashy pale—but all for his mother's sake. When afterward his father died, he was abroad and did not come to the funeral. Nor has he been here since; he is a lawyer, that I know, and he has never married. But he thought no more of me, and had he seen me, he would certainly have never recognized me, so ugly as I am now. And it is right it should be so."

Then she went on to speak of the bitter days of adversity, when

troubles had come upon them in a flood. They had five hundred rix-dollars, and as in their street a house could be bought for two hundred, it was considered a good investment to buy it, take it down, and build it anew. The house was bought; masons and carpenters made an estimate that one thousand and twenty rix-dollars more would be required. Erik arranged to borrow this sum from Copenhagen, but the ship that was to bring him the money was lost, and the money with it. "It was just then that my sweet boy, who lies sleeping here, was born. Then his father fell sick; for three quarters of a year I had to dress and undress him every day. We went on borrowing and borrowing; all our things had to be sold, one by one; at last Erik died. Since then I have toiled and moiled for the boy's sake, have gone out cleaning and washing, done coarse work or fine, whichever I could get; but I do everything worse and worse; my strength will never return any more; it is our Lord's will! He will take me away, and find better provision for my boy."

She fell asleep. In the morning she seemed better, and fancied she was strong enough to go to her work again. But no sooner did she feel the cold water than a shivering seized her, she felt about convulsively with her hands, tried to step forward, and fell down. Her head lay on the dry bank, but her feet were in the water of the brook, her wooden shoes were carried away by the stream. Here she was found by Maren.

A message had been taken to her lodging that the sheriff wanted her, had something to say to her. It was too late; the poor washerwoman was dead. The letter that had brought the sheriff news of his brother's death also gave an abstract of his will; among other bequests he had left six hundred rix-dollars to the glovemaking's widow, who had formerly served his parents. "There was some love nonsense between my brother and her," quoth the sheriff. "It is all as well she is out of the way; now it will all come to the boy, and I shall apprentice him to honest folk who will make him a good workman." For whatever the sheriff might do, were it ever so kind an action, he always spoke harshly and unkindly. So he now called the boy to him, promised to provide for him, and told him it was a good thing his mother was dead; she was good-for-nothing!

She was buried in the paupers' churchyard. Maren planted a little rose tree over the grave; the boy stood by her side the while.

"My darling mother!" he sighed, as the tears streamed down from his eyes. "It was not true that she was good-for-nothing!"

"No, indeed!" cried her old friend, looking up to heaven. "Let the world say she was good-for-nothing; our Lord in his heavenly kingdom will not say so."

THE WINDMILL

A WINDMILL stood upon the hill, proud to look at, and it was proud too.

"I am not proud at all," it said, "but I am very much enlightened without and within. I have sun and moon for my outward use, and for inward use too; and into the bargain I have tallow candles, train-oil lamps, and wax candles; I may well say that I'm enlightened. I am a thinking being, and so well constructed that it's quite delightful. I have a good windpipe in my chest, and I have four wings that are placed outside my head, just beneath my hat; the birds have only two wings, and are obliged to carry them on their backs. I am a Dutchman by birth—that may be seen by my figure—a flying Dutchman. They are considered supernatural beings. I know, and yet I am quite natural. I have a gallery round my chest, and house room beneath it; that's where my thoughts dwell. My strongest thought, who rules and reigns, is called by the others 'The Man in the Mill.' He knows what he wants, and is lord over the meal and the bran; but he has his companion too, and she calls herself 'Mother.' She is the very heart of me. She does not run about stupidly and awkwardly, for she knows what she wants, she knows what she can do; she's as soft as a zephyr and as strong as a storm; she knows how to begin a thing carefully, and to have her own way. She is my soft temper, and the father is my hard one: they are two, and yet one; they each call the other 'My half.' These two have some little boys, young thoughts, that can grow. The little ones keep everything in order. When, lately, in my wisdom, I let the father and the boys examine my throat and the hole in my chest, to see what was going on there—for something in me was out of order, and it's well to examine oneself—the little ones made a tremendous noise. The youngest jumped up into my hat, and shouted so there that it tickled me. The little thoughts may grow; I know that very well; and out in the world thoughts come too, and not only of my kind. for as far as I can see I cannot discern anything like myself; but the wingless houses, whose throats make no noise, have thoughts too, and these come to my thoughts, and make love to them, as it is called. It's wonderful enough—yes, there are many wonderful things. Something has come over me, or into me—something has changed in the millwork: it seems as if the one half, the father, had altered, and had received a better temper and a more affectionate help-mate—so young and good, and yet the same, only more gentle and good through the course of time. What was bitter has passed away, and the whole is much more comfortable.

"The days go on, and the days come nearer and nearer to clearness and to joy; and then a day will come when it will be over with me; but not over altogether. I must be pulled down that I may be built up again; I shall cease, but yet shall live on. To become quite a different being, and yet remain the same! That's difficult for me to understand, however enlightened I may be with sun, moon, stearine, train-oil, and tallow. My old woodwork and my old brickwork will rise again from the dust!

"I will hope that I may keep my old thoughts, the father in the mill, and the mother, great ones and little ones—the family; for I call them all, great and little, the *company of thoughts*, because I must, and cannot refrain from it.

"And I must also remain 'myself,' with my throat in my chest, my wings on my head, the gallery round my body; else I should not know myself, nor could the others know me, and say, 'There's the Mill on the hill, proud to look at, and yet not proud at all.'"

That is what the Mill said. Indeed, it said much more, but that is the most important part.

And the days came, and the days went, and yesterday was the last day.

Then the mill caught fire. The flames rose up high, and beat out and in, and bit at the beams and planks, and ate them up. The mill fell, and nothing remained of it but a heap of ashes. The smoke drove across the scene of the conflagration, and the wind carried it away.

Whatever had been alive in the mill remained, and what had been gained by it has nothing to do with this story.

The miller's family—one soul, many thoughts, and yet only one—built a new, a splendid mill, which answered its purpose. It was quite like the old one, and people said, "Why, yonder is the mill on the hill, proud to look at!" But this mill was better arranged, more according to the time than the last, so that progress might be made. The old beams had become worm-eaten and spongy—they lay in dust and ashes. The body of the mill did not rise out of the dust as they had believed it would do: they had taken it literally, and all things are *not* to be taken literally.

THE NECK OF A BOTTLE

IN A NARROW, crooked street, among many shabby dwellings, stood one very narrow, very tall house. None but poor folk lived here, but poorest of all looked the attic, where, outside the little window, hung

in the sunshine an old bird cage, that could not even boast of a proper bird glass; it had instead the neck of a bottle, placed upside down, with a cork stopping up the mouth. At the open window stood an old maid; she had just been adorning the cage with chickweed; the little canary who lived a prisoner within it hopped from perch to perch, and sang with all his might.

"Ah! you may well sing!" said the broken bottle. Truly it could not speak aloud as we speak, but it had its own thoughts within for all that. "Ah! it is easy for you to sing!—you, with your limbs whole. You should just try what it is to have lost one's lower half—to have only a neck and a mouth left, and then a cork stuffed into one. I should like to hear you sing then! But it is well somebody is pleased. I have no cause to sing, neither can I, but I could sing, once, when I was a whole bottle—I was called a lark then. Did not I sing that day in the wood when the furrier's daughter was betrothed? I remember it as though it had happened yesterday. I have lived through many things—I have been through fire and water—down in the black earth and higher up than most. And now I hover amid air and sunshine outside the cage. It might be worth while to listen to my history, but I am not going to proclaim it aloud, for one good reason—I can't!"

And so it told, or rather thought over, its own history to itself in silence, and the little bird sang merrily the while, and the people down below drove, or rode, or walked through the street, each thinking of his own affairs, just as the broken bottle did.

It remembered the fiery furnace in the factory, where it had been blown into being; it remembered how warm it was at first—how it had looked into the wild furnace, the home of its birth, and longed to leap into it again. But then, little by little, as it cooled, it found itself well off where it was, standing in a row with a whole regiment of brothers and sisters, all born from the same furnace, but some blown into champagne bottles, others into bottles for ale—and this makes a difference. Certainly, in the course of time and events, an ale flask may possibly embrace the costliest *Lachryma Christi*, and a champagne bottle may be basely filled with blacking; but what each was born for will still be apparent through the form of each, and not even blacking can efface that patent of nobility.

All the bottles were soon packed up, and packed off, our bottle among them. Little at that time did it think of ending thus serving as a bird glass. No matter, it is an honorable life that is thus useful to the last. It first saw daylight again, after it had been unpacked, together with its comrades, in a wine merchant's cellar, and was then, for the first time, rinsed out—which was a ridiculous performance, it thought. The bottle now lay empty and corkless—felt itself wonderfully dull, as

though wanting something—it knew not what. But now it was filled with good, glorious wine, received a cork, and was sealed up, with a label pasted on it, "Best Quality." It felt it was now a first-class bottle; the wine was good, and the bottle was good. Something within it seemed to be singing of things it knew nothing whatever about. The green sunlit mountains, where grows the vine, and where fair girls and merry youths sing and dance together. Ah! there it is right pleasant to live! Something seemed singing about this inside the bottle, as within the hearts of young poets, who yet know no more about the matter than the bottle knew.

One morning it was bought. The furrier's boy was sent to fetch a bottle of the best wine, and thus it became transported into a large basket, together with ham, cheese, and sausages, the best butter, and the whitest bread. The furrier's daughter herself packed the basket. She was very young and very pretty; she had laughing brown eyes, and smiling lips, almost as expressive as the eyes; her hands were small, soft, and white, but not so white as her forehead and her throat. She was one of the prettiest girls in the town, and not yet betrothed.

And the basket lay in her lap while the party drove out into the wood. The neck of the bottle peeped forth between the folds of the white tablecloth; there was red sealing wax on the cork, and this sealing wax looked right into the young girl's face, and into the face of the young man who sat next her; he had been her companion from childhood; he was a portrait-painter's son, who had lately passed with honorable mention through his examination for the naval service. On the morrow he was to go with his ship to foreign lands; there was some talk about his voyage, and just while this was talked about it was not quite so pleasant to look at the eyes and lips of the furrier's pretty daughter.

The two young people took a walk in the green forest, talking—what did they talk about? The bottle could not hear that—it was left in the basket. It was very, very long before the basket was unpacked, but then? Why certainly some pleasant things must have happened meanwhile, for all eyes were laughing, even those of the furrier's daughter, though she talked less than before, and her cheeks blushed like two red roses.

The furrier took up the bottle, took up the corkscrew. O! what a strange sensation was that when, for the first time, the cork was drawn! The bottle had never been able to forget that solemn moment; and then the gurgling noise wherewith the wine flowed out into the glasses!

"The health of the betrothed!" cried the father, and every glass was emptied, and the young man kissed his pretty bride. Then he refilled the glasses, exclaiming: "To our joyful wedding this day next year!" And when the glasses had been emptied the second time, he took the

bottle and raised it high in the air, saying: "You have served us here on the brightest day of my life, you shall never be profaned by any meaner service!"

And he flung it high into the air. But it came down again—it fell softly among the thick reeds fringing the little woodland lake. The broken bottle remembered perfectly well how it had lain there, thinking: "I gave them wine, they gave me muddy water; no matter, it was well meant!" It could see no more of the happy couple and the pleased parents, but it could hear them talking and singing in the distance. And presently two peasant boys came that way; they peeped in among the reeds, spied out the bottle, and took it away. Now it was provided for.

At their home in the little woodland hut, where they dwelt, they had, the day before, parted from their elder brother, who was a sailor, and had been to say farewell before going out on a long voyage. The mother was now packing up a few things which the father was to take to him in the town that evening—he would see him once more before his departure. A little flask full of spiced brandy had been placed in the parcel, but now the boys showed the larger and stronger bottle which they had found—it could hold more than the little one. So it was filled now, not with red wine as before, but with bitter, wholesome drops, good for the stomach. The new-found bottle was to go, the little one to stay at home. So now the bottle went forth on its travels; it went on board to be Peter Jensen's property, on board the very same ship by which went the young mate who had been betrothed that morning. He never looked at the bottle, or if he had, it would never have occurred to him to think, "This is the same bottle from which our health was drunk."

And now it contained not wine indeed, but something as good as wine. When Peter Jensen took it out, his comrades always called it "The apothecary"; it gave right good medicine, they thought, and it helped them as long as a drop was left in it. It was a pleasant time, and the bottle sang after its fashion; and thus it came to be nicknamed, "The great lark," "Peter Jensen's lark."

A long time had passed away, and it had long stood empty in a corner, when—the bottle knew not whether it was on its way out, or on the way home, it had not been ashore—a mighty storm arose. It was night, and pitch dark; great heavy black waves surged and tossed the vessel to and fro; the mast broke, the planks flew out, the pumps were of no avail. The ship was sinking; but in the last minute the young sailor wrote on a fragment of paper: "Lord Jesu, have mercy on us! we perish!" He added his bride's name, his own, and that of the ship, rolled the note into an empty bottle that came to his hand, pressed the cork down tight, and flung the bottle far into the stormy sea. Little thought he that this was the same bottle that had given him wine on the day of

his happiness and hope. Now it rocked and tossed upon the billows, bearing its message, its greeting from the dead to the living.

The ship sank, the crew perished, but the bottle flew on like a bird—it bore a love letter. And the sun rose up and the sun went down—that reminded the bottle of the hour of its birth, in the red glowing furnace; it longed to fly into his embrace. It encountered new storms; still it was neither swallowed up by sharks nor dashed against rocks. For more than a year and a day it drifted about, now northward, now southward, as it was carried by the tide. Certainly it was its own master; but one may get tired of that.

The letter, the last farewell from bridegroom to bride, would bring only sorrow, if it ever fell into the right hands. But where were those hands? the hands that had gleamed so white when they spread the tablecloth over the fresh grass in the green wood, on the day of betrothal? Where was the furrier's daughter? Where, indeed? What land was nearest now? The bottle could not answer these questions; it drifted and drifted, and was at last so weary of drifting—for which it had never been intended; but it drifted on all the same, till at last it was cast ashore on a foreign land. It understood not a word of what was spoken here; it was not the language it had always heard before, and one loses much in a country where one does not understand the language.

The bottle was picked up and examined, the letter inside was noticed, taken out, turned and twisted about, but not a word of what was written thereon could the folk make out. They understood, of course, that the bottle had been flung overboard, and that something was written on the paper, but that "something" was a complete mystery. And so the note was rolled up and put into the bottle again, and the bottle was placed in a large cabinet, in a large room, in a large house. Every time strangers came to the house the note was taken out, unrolled, turned and twisted about, until the writing—it was only pencil writing—became more and more illegible: at last the letters could hardly be traced at all. For a year the bottle remained in the cabinet, then it was sent up into an attic, where it got smothered up with dust and spider webs; there it lurked and thought on its better days, when it poured out red wine in the fresh wood; when it was rocked by the billows and had had a secret, a letter, a sigh of farewell, intrusted to its safe keeping.

It was left among old lumber for twenty years; it would have been left there longer still, had not the house been rebuilt. The roof was taken off, the bottle was descried, remarks were made upon it, but it could not understand. One learns nothing, banished to a lumber room—not even in twenty years. "Had I only spent that time in the parlor downstairs!" sighed the bottle, "how much I should have learned!"

It was now washed and rinsed out; in truth, it needed washing. It

felt itself quite clear and transparent; it had renewed its youth in its old age, but the note, the precious note, was lost in the process. It was now filled with seed-corn, corked up tight, and well packed—it knew not where, but it could see neither lamp nor candle, not to speak of sun or moon; and “it is a pity to see nothing when one is traveling,” thought the bottle. It saw nothing, but it did something—that was more important; it traveled, and arrived at the place for which it was destined. It was unpacked.

“What a deal of trouble those outlandish folk have taken about it!” Those were the first words it heard, and it understood them well; they were spoken in the language the bottle had heard from the first, at the factory, at the wine merchant’s, in the wood, and on shipboard; the only right, good old language, made to be understood! The bottle had come home to its own country! it nearly sprang out of the hands that held it, in its joy. It was emptied of its contents, and sent down into the cellar to be out of the way; no matter! home is home, even in the cellar! There it never thought how long it lay unnoticed, it lay comfortably; and, after a long interval, one day people came in, took this bottle and others, and went out.

The garden of the house was decked out in great magnificence; bright-colored lamps were hung in wreaths, and paper lanterns shone like large bright tulips. It was a lovely evening; the air was still and mild, the stars gattered brilliantly, and as for the new moon, why, people with good eyesight could see the whole, like a round, grayish globe, with one corner tinged with gold.

In the sidewalks there were a few illuminations too, though not so many as in the center of the garden; a row of bottles, each with a candle in it, was set up along the hedges. The bottle that we know was among these; it felt perfectly in a state of rapture; it was now in a garden as formerly it had been in the wood; again it heard festive sounds, song and music, the hum and buzz of passers-by, especially from the garden side, where the lamps were burning, and the paper lanterns displayed their varied colors. For its own part, it stood in a sidewalk—that even supplied matter for thought; the bottle stood bearing its light—stood there for use and for ornament both, and that was just right. In such an hour one forgets twenty years spent in a lumber room—and it is good to forget when memory is sadness.

Close by passed a pair, arm in arm, like the bridal pair out in the wood, like the mate and the furrier’s daughter: the bottle could have believed it had lived it all over again. A tide of guests passed to and fro in the gardens, and among them an old maid, not friendless, indeed—far from it! but one who had survived all her relatives; and she was thinking of the same day years ago that the bottle thought of—she

thought of the green wood and the young pair of betrothed lovers. Well might she think of them! for of those two she had been one; she was the survivor! that had been the happiest hour of her life—an hour never to be forgotten, however old an old maid may be. But she did not recognize the bottle, neither did the bottle recognize her; and thus folk pass one another by in this world. But they are sure to meet again, sooner or later, as did these two, who were now denizens of the same town.

The bottle's fate took it from the garden to the wine-merchant's; there it was again filled with wine, and then sold to the aeronaut, who took it with him on his next ascent in his balloon. A crowd of people came to look on, a band of musicians had been engaged, and many other preparations made; the bottle witnessed all these from a basket, wherein he lay in company with a live rabbit, who was wretchedly low-spirited, because he knew he went up only to come down again with the parachute. The bottle, on the contrary, knew nothing about the matter; it saw how the balloon swelled out larger and larger, and when larger could not be, it began to lift itself higher and higher, to roll uneasily; then the ropes that held it down were cut, and up it flew with aeronaut, basket, rabbit, and bottle; the musicians struck up, and the people all cried, "Hurra!"

"This is a new style of navigation," thought the bottle. "There's one good point about it; one can hardly run upon rocks this way."

And the eyes of several thousands of people looked after the balloon, and the old maid watched it too; she was standing at her open attic window, where hung the cage with the little canary, who at that time did not possess a glass for his water, but was obliged to content himself with a cup. In the window stood a flowering myrtle; the old maid had thrust it on one side while she leaned forward to look out; she could see into the balloon; she saw how the aeronaut let the rabbit fall with the parachute; how he drank to the health of the crowd down below, and then flung the bottle high into the air. But she little thought that she had seen this identical bottle flying in the air once before, on her day of happiness in the green wood, in the time of her youth.

The bottle had no time to think at all, so unexpectedly had he attained the highest point of his life. Towers and roofs lay far below; men were so tiny, they could hardly be seen at all.

And now it sank, quite after a different fashion from the rabbit's. The bottle made somersaults in the air, felt itself so young, so wild! it was half filled with wine at first, but not for long. What an air voyage! The sun shone on the bottle, the eyes of all men followed it; the balloon was already far away. Soon the bottle fell upon one of the roofs and dashed in two, but such a spirit seemed to animate the fragments, they could not be still! They leaped and they rolled, ever down-

ward, downward, till they reached the courtyard, where they broke into smaller fragments. Only the neck of the bottle was left whole; it looked as if it had been cut off with a diamond.

"It is still good for a bird glass," said the man who lived in the cellar; but he himself possessed neither bird nor cage, and it would have been hardly worth while to procure these only because a fragment of a bottle that might be used as a glass had fallen into his hands. But it might be useful to the old maid in the attic, he thought; and thus the broken bottle was taken upstairs, a cork was put in, the part that had formerly been uppermost was set lowest, as often happens in changes, fresh water was poured in, and it was hung on the side of the cage for the use of the little bird who sang so merrily.

"Ah, it is easy for you to sing!" quoth the bird glass. It was a remarkable bird glass, certainly; it had been up in a balloon; that, at least, was known of its history. Now, in its place by the cage, it could hear the hum and buzz of the people in the street below, could hear the old maid chatting in her chamber: she had a visitor just now, a friend of her own age, and they were talking, not about the bird glass, but about the myrtle at the window.

"Indeed, I will not let you throw away two rix-dollars for your daughter's bridal bouquet," said the old maid. "You shall have a charming one, full of flowers! Just look at my beautiful myrtle! It is only an offshoot from the myrtle you gave me the day after my betrothal—don't you remember? I was to have made my bridal bouquet from it, when the year was up. But my wedding day never came! Those eyes closed to this world that were to have been my light and joy through life; down, down, low beneath the waves he sleeps sweetly, my own darling! And the myrtle and I grew old together; and when the myrtle withered, I took the last fresh bough, and set it in the mold, and now the bough is a tree, and shall serve at last at a wedding feast—shall supply your daughter's bridal bouquet!"

And there were tears in the old maid's eyes, as she remembered her betrothal in the wood, her lover's bright face, his caressing words, his first kiss—but she said no more; she was an old maid now. She thought of so many things; but she never thought at all that just outside her window was a memorial of that time, even the neck of the bottle whence had gushed the wine from which her own and her lover's health had been drunk. Neither did the old bottle recognize her, for it did not listen to a single word she said, partly and chiefly because it thought only of itself.

GOLDEN TREASURE

THE DRUMMER'S WIFE went to church; she saw the new altar, the pictures on the walls, the angel faces carved on the arches. Beautiful were the figures in the pictures, dressed in bright colors, and with a glory round their heads; beautiful were the carved cherubs too, painted and gilded both, their hair shining like gold, like sunshine. But the sunshine itself was still more beautiful, the sunshine that God, not man, had made; ever brighter and redder it glowed between the dark trees, as the sun went down. And she gazed upon the red setting sun, and had her own thoughts about it and many other things, but most of all about the little child that the stork would bring her: and the drummer's wife felt so happy while she gazed, and she wished most fervently that her child might be a creature bright as a sunbeam, or at least as one of the shining angels in the church.

And when she actually held her little one in her arms, and lifted it up to show her husband, it seemed to her that her infant really had some resemblance to the cherubs; it had hair like gold, hair that had caught the reflection of the setting sun.

"My sunshine, my wealth, my golden treasure!" cried the mother, kissing the bright locks; and all was gladness, music, and song in the drummer's home. The drummer himself beat a whirlwind on his drum, and the drum seemed to cry, "Red hair! the young one has red hair! listen, believe the drum and not thy mother; drum-a-drum, drum!"

And the town agreed with the drum.

The boy was taken to church and christened; he was named Peter. All the town called him "Peter, the drummer's red-haired boy"; but his mother kissed his red hair and called him "Golden Treasure."

In the hollow way, in the soft clay, had a multitude of folk scratched their names with a penknife. "That is fame," quoth the drummer; "every one likes to be remembered"; and he too scratched his name and that of his little son there. But in spring came the swallows; during their travels they had seen all manner of characters in the rock-side, or within the temple walls of India, chronicling great deeds of mighty kings, immortal names, so old that no one could spell them out. Such is fame! And the swallows built their nests in the clay, and the mold crumbled, and the rain came down, washing away all traces of the names, the drummer's and his little son's among them. "At any rate, Peter's name was there for a year and a half," quoth his father.

"Fool!" thought the drum; but it could only say, "Drum-a-drum-drum! Drum-a-drum-drum!"

A boy full of life and spirit was "the drummer's red-haired son." A lovely voice he had, and he sang like the birds in the wood—all melody, and yet no tune. "He must be a choirboy," said his mother; "he must sing in the church, standing under the pretty gilded cherubs, whom he is so like."

"Choirboy?" repeated the wits of the town. "Say rather fireboy"; and the drum heard it.

"Don't go home, Peter," cried the boys in the street. "If they send you to sleep in the attic, your hair will set the thatch on fire."

"Beware of the drumsticks!" returned Peter, clinching his little fists; and tiny fellow as he was, his neighbors learned to keep out of his way.

The town musician was stiff and proud, a great gentleman in his way; he thought well of Peter, took him home with him, and gave him a lesson on the violin; he fancied there was something in the boy's fingers that showed him born to become more than a drummer.

"I will be a soldier!" declared Peter, who considered it the finest thing in the world to wear a uniform, shoulder a gun, and march, "Left, right! left, right!"

"Ah, thou shalt learn to obey the drumskin, drum-a-drum-drum!" quoth the drum.

"It is all very well being a soldier when there's a war," said Peter's father, "so that one may march home a general."

"God save us from a war!" cried his mother.

"Why, we have nothing to lose," rejoined the drummer.

"Yes, we have my boy," she replied.

"But just think, if he were to come home a general?" asked the father.

"Without arms and legs! No, thank you; I would rather keep my Golden Treasure entire."

Drum, drum-a-drum-drum! War came, in real earnest; the soldiers marched forth, and the drummer's red-haired boy with them. The mother wept for her "Golden Treasure"; the father saw him in imagination return home "famous"; the town musician thought he had better have stayed at home and studied music.

"Red-tuft!" cried the soldiers, and Peter only laughed; but when some called him "Foxy," he bit his lips and looked another way; that was a jest he did not relish. But the boy was brisk, merry, and good-humored, and thus soon became a favorite. Amid rain and mist, wet through to the skin, he had to sleep many a night under the open sky; but his good humor did not fail him, and he was up again briskly and

sounded with his drumsticks, "Drum-a-drum-drum! up every man!" Certainly he was a born drummer boy.

It was a day of battle: the sun was not yet risen, but it was morning; the air was cold, the struggle hot, the morning was misty, but still more mist came from the gunpowder. Bullets and grenades flew overhead; still "Forward." One after another the men sank down, their temples bleeding, their cheeks white as ashes. But the little drummer boy's color was still fresh; not a whit hurt, he looked with beaming eyes at the dog belonging to the regiment as it ran by his side; the whole seemed more like a game to him, the child to whom the balls might have been playthings.

"March, forward, march!" were the words of command given to the drummers; but orders may have to be reversed—and with good reason too—and now the word was "Backward!" But still the little drummer boy sounded "March, forward," not understanding that the order was reversed; and the soldiers obeyed the drum, and still advanced. It was well they did so, the blunder gave them a victory.

But victory is dearly bought. The grenades tear off the flesh in bleeding morsels, set fire to the heap of straw whither the poor wounded wretch had dragged himself, thinking to lie safe for many hours, though perhaps only to die forgotten and forsaken. These are ill things to think upon, yet think on them one must even in the peaceful town far off. How often did not Peter's father and mother think of them while he was in the war!

It was the day of battle; the sun had not yet risen, but it was morning. The drummer and his wife had fallen into a slumber after a wakeful night, spent in talking about their boy. But he, wherever he was, God's hand was over him they knew. And his father now dreamt that the war was ended, that the soldiers came home, and that Peter wore a silver cross on his breast; but his mother dreamt that she was in church gazing on the pictures and the carved angels with gilded hair, and that her own boy—her heart's Golden Treasure—stood in white robes amid the angels, and sang so sweetly, as only angels can sing, and was lifted up into the sunshine with them, nodding a kindly greeting to his mother.

"My Golden Treasure!" she exclaimed, and she awoke. "Now I know that our Lord has taken him," said she, and she clasped her hands, leant her head against the bed curtains, and wept. "Where has he found his rest? in the wide grave they dig for so many of the brave dead, or in the waters of the marsh? No one will know his grave, no holy words will be read over it." And the Lord's Prayer passed mutely through her mind, her head drooped in weariness, and she fell asleep.

Days slip away, now in waking hours, now in dreams.

It was evening; a rainbow arched over the field of battle, touching

the skirt of the wood and the deep moor. There is a popular saying, "Where the rainbow touches the earth a treasure lies buried—a golden treasure"; so it was here; no one thought of the little drummer boy as his mother thought, and therefore had she thus dreamt of him. But not a hair of his head was lost, not a single golden hair. "Drum-a-drum-drum; see him come, see him come!" For with song and shout, and decked with the green leaves of victory, the regiment marched home; the war was ended, peace was proclaimed. The dog belonging to the regiment jumped and ran, making many wide circuits, as though to make the journey three times longer.

Days and weeks slipped away, and, behold, Peter entered his parents' room: he was as brown as a wild man of the woods, his eyes so bright, his face beaming as the sunshine. And his mother clasped him in her arms, kissed his lips, his eyes, his red hair. She had her boy again: there was no silver cross on his breast, as his father had dreamt, but he had his whole bones, which his mother had not dreamt. What joy! all three laughed and wept by turns, and Peter embraced the old drum in the corner: "Here it stands still, the old thing!" and his father beat a tattoo upon it, "as much fuss as though there were a fire in the town," quoth the old drum to itself.

And now what next? Ask the town musician. "Peter grows too big to be a drummer boy," said he: "Peter will be a bigger man than I," which was true enough, for all that he had taken a lifetime to learn, Peter learned in half a year. And he took such delight in learning, he enjoyed everything, his eyes sparkled and his hair shone, as could not be denied.

"He should dye his hair," said their next door neighbor. "The police chief's daughter did so, and how well it answered; she was betrothed immediately."

"But her hair soon afterward grew as green as duckweed, and she has had to dye it again, ever so many times."

"Well, she can afford it, and so can Peter. Does not he go into the best houses, even to the mayor's, to teach Miss Lotty the harpsichord!" Ah! Peter knew how to play, to play right out of his heart charming pieces that had never been noted down on music paper. Through moonlight nights and stormy nights he played alike—played till his thoughts grew strong and soaring, and great plans for the future hovered before him. And he sat beside the mayor's daughter, Miss Lotty, at the harpsichord, and her delicate fingers danced lightly over chords that vibrated right into Peter's heart; it seemed as though it were growing too big for his body to hold it, and this happened not once only, but many times, and so it chanced that one day he seized the delicate fingers and the

daintily formed hand and kissed it, and looked right into her large brown eyes. There's no telling what he said, but we may guess it. And Lotty colored crimson, face and neck, and not a word did she answer, and just then strangers came into the room, among them the councilor's son, with his high smooth forehead. But Peter stayed on, and Lotty's kindest glances were given to him.

That evening at home he talked of going abroad, and of the golden treasure that his violin was for him. "Drum-a-drum-drum," thought the old drum in the corner. "So Peter has gone mad; the house is on fire, methinks."

Next day the mother went to market. "Have you heard the news, Peter?" began she on her return. "Charming news! The mayor's daughter, Miss Lotty, was betrothed to the councilor's son yesterday evening!"

"No!" cried Peter, springing up from his chair. But his mother insisted "Yes"; she had it from the barber's wife, and the barber had it from the mayor's own lips. And Peter grew pale as death, and sat down again in his chair.

"What is the matter with you?" cried his mother.

"All right! let me alone!" said he, but the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"My sweet child! my Golden Treasure!" muttered the mother; and she wept, while the old drum in the corner sang to itself: "Lotty is dead! Lotty is dead! and now the song is ended!"

But no, the song was not ended; many verses, and some of the best, had yet to be sung. "What a fuss she makes!" quoth the next-door neighbor of Peter's mother. "All the world must read the letters she gets from her Golden Treasure, and hear what the newspapers say about him and his violin. He sends her money too, and he had need, now she is a widow."

"He plays before kings and emperors," said the town musician. "That never fell to my lot, but he is at least my pupil, and will not forget his old master."

"My husband dreamed," said his mother, "that Peter came home from the war with a silver cross on his breast; he does wear a cross now, though not one earned in the war; he bears an order of knighthood. His father should have lived to see it!"

"He is famous!" quoth the old drum, and everybody in his native town said the same. Peter, the drummer's red-haired boy—Peter, whom they had seen in wooden shoes, a little drummer boy—was now famous.

"He played to us before he played to the king," said the mayor's wife. "Once upon a time he was mad about our Lotty—how my husband

laughed when he was told of it! Ah! that boy must be always looking so high!"

Yes, a golden treasure lay hidden in the heart and soul of the drummer's boy, who had formerly sounded "Forward!" to troops ready to retreat—a golden treasure, the gift of music. In his violin seemed sometimes to dwell the power and volume of an organ; while at other times all the elves of Midsummer Eve seemed dancing as he touched the strings, and the throstle's song and the human voice were heard between; and thus all hearts were moved when he played, and his name was borne throughout all lands. "And then he is so handsome!" said some of the ladies, old as well as young; and one lady who had set up an album for the locks of celebrated characters, begged for a tress from the young violinist's abundance of hair, "red," or "golden," as you liked to call it.

And now once more to the drummer's lowly dwelling returned the son, handsome as a prince, happier than a king, his eyes sparkling, his face like sunshine. And he held his mother in his arms, and she kissed him, and wept for joy; and he greeted as old friends every piece of worn-out furniture the room possessed, even to the chest of drawers, with the tea-cups and flower-glass upon it, and the little cot where he had slept when a child. But the old drum he dragged forward into the middle of the room, saying: "Father would have sounded a welcome upon thee today, but now I must do it instead." And he thundered so upon the drum! a regular tempest it was, and the old drum felt honored thereby. But somehow it chanced that the drumskin burst.

"Well! he *has* a fist!" quoth the old drum to itself. "Now I shall always keep a souvenir of him! I expect that mother, too, will burst for joy over her Golden Treasure!"

This is the history of Golden Treasure.

THE OLD BACHELOR'S NIGHTCAP

THERE is in Copenhagen a street known by the strange name of Hysken Street. Why is it so named? what can "Hysken" mean? The name was originally German: "Häuschen," it ought to be called, meaning "small houses." For the houses in this street at the time it received its name were very much like the wooden booths we still see set up in the markets—a little bigger perhaps, and provided with windows; but then these windows were made only of horn or stretched bladder, for at that time glass windows were too dear to be common. And the

time referred to is so very long ago, that my great-great-grandfather, when he spoke of it, always called it "the days of old." It was, in fact, several hundred years ago.

The rich merchants of Bremen and Lübeck used then to trade in Copenhagen, not in their own persons, but sending thither their clerks, who dwelt in the wooden booths in the Street of Small Houses, and there sold their ales and spicery; good German ales of different kinds, and all manner of spices, saffron, anise, ginger, and especially pepper. And from this very pepper which they sold, these petty German traders in Denmark came to be called "Pebersvende," or "Pepper-boys." And as it formed part of the engagement they entered into before they left home that they were not to marry in Denmark, and as many of them sojourned in Copenhagen till they were quite old men, living alone, cooking and doing everything for themselves, they often grew such odd old fellows, with such peculiar whims and ways—and from them the name of "Pebersvend" has come to be given to all single men who have attained old age. So much by way of introduction.

Up in the Street of Small Houses, in the old times, there was no pavement; folk tumbled into hole after hole, and very narrow was it; the booths were such near neighbors that in summertime a rope was often suspended across the street from one booth to the opposite one. And everywhere was such an aromatic odor of pepper, saffron, and ginger. Behind the counters stood not young lads, no, but old fellows clad after old fashions. It is a pity it never occurred to one of them to have his portrait painted, for it would be worth while now to possess a picture of any one of them, as he stood behind the counter or walked to church on holidays. The hat was broad-brimmed and high-crowned, with perhaps a feather in it, if the wearer were not very old: the woolen shirt was concealed by a smooth linen collar; the jacket was neatly buttoned up, the cape hung loosely over it, and the breeches reached down to the square-toed shoes; stockings they wore not. In the belt were fastened a spoon and knife, to be used at meals, nay, also a larger knife, or dagger, for self-defense, as was often needed in those days. Clad after this fashion, on festival days, was old Anthony, one of the oldest traders of the Small Houses, with this addition, that under his hat he wore a knitted cap, a regular nightcap. He had used himself to it, and wore it always; he possessed two exactly alike; he was just the old fellow for a picture: long and lean as a lath, wrinkled about the lips and eyes; he had long bony fingers and gray bushy eyebrows. Over his left eye hung a perfect tuft; it was not handsome, certainly, but it made him a man easily recognized. It was said of him that he came from Bremen: this was a mistake; his mother lived there, but he himself came from Thuringia, from the town of Eisenach, close under Wartburg. Of these places old Anthony spoke but little, but he thought the more.

The old fellows in the Small Houses rarely met together; each sojourned in his own booth, which was shut up early in the evening, and then looked dark enough, with only a faint ray of light piercing through the little horn window-pane on the roof. Within, perhaps, the solitary foreigner was sitting on his bed, chanting his evening psalm out of his old German hymnbook, or was poking about over his household matters. A merry life it was not by any means; a bitter lot is that of the stranger in a strange land.

A miserable place indeed was the Street of Small Houses on a dark, stormy night, amid wind and rain. Not a light could be seen save the one very small lamp hanging just at the end of the street under the picture of the Blessed Virgin which was painted on the wall, and the water was heard splashing, splashing ceaselessly against the woodwork. Such evenings must be long and lonesome, and would be worse still were people unoccupied. To pack and unpack, polish one's scales, etc., cannot be needful every day, but then one generally finds something else to be done. So at least always did old Anthony; he had his clothes to patch, his shoes to mend. And when at last he got into bed, and drew his nightcap closer over his face, he was pretty sure to draw it up again to see if his light were properly extinguished. He would feel about, draw down the wick, turn round on the other side, and lie down again, but then would come the thought, "I wonder whether every coal has really burnt out in the little fire; one spark might kindle up into mischief," and with this idea he would creep out of bed, grope his way down the steps—staircase it could not be called—and yet when he got down there was sure to be not a single spark left in the little firepot. Yet before he had got halfway back to bed, he would feel uncertain whether he had drawn the iron bolt over his door. His lean limbs shivered, and his teeth chattered with cold before he got safe into bed again; then he would draw the coverlet closer, his nightcap closer over his eyes, and turn his thoughts right away from the burden and labor of the day; but hardly was this to his comfort. For old memories came then and drew their curtains round, and O! there lurk sharp needles in them; when we touch them they pierce the tender skin, draw blood, burn within us, bring tears to our eyes! So at least was it with old Anthony; oftentimes hot tears like the brightest pearls rolled down over the coverlet or on the floor; his eyes seemed to burn with them or their light seemed turned into darkness, but still a vivid picture seemed before his sight. Then he would wipe his eyes with his nightcap, and both tears and pictures vanished; but the source of both remained, it lay deep in his heart. The pictures came not in regular order, as they had followed one another in his past life, and the most painful ones came oftenest; but these even had a brightness and glory of their own, only they cast the deepest shadows.

"How beautiful are the beech woods of Denmark!" people are wont to exclaim. But more beautiful to Anthony were the beech woods near Wartburg: mightier, and more venerable than any Danish trees were the old oaks up by the proud baronial castle, where creeping plants trailed over the hard blocks of stone; sweeter far was the fragrance of the apple-blossoms there than in the Danish land. He felt this strongly, bitterly; a large bright tear trickled forth; by its light he seemed to see two children at play, a boy and a girl. The boy had red cheeks, curling yellow hair, and honest blue eyes; he was little Anthony, the rich trader's son, himself, in fact. The little girl had brown eyes and black hair, and the expression of her face was both bold and clever; she was the burgomaster's daughter, Maddalena. The two children were playing with an apple, shaking it and listening to the pips rattling inside; then they cut it in half, and between them ate it up all but one kernel, which the little girl proposed to put into the ground. "Then you will see what will come of it! something you would never fancy, only not directly. A whole apple tree! think of that." And they planted it in a flower pot, both very zealous in the work, the boy hollowing out a bed for it in the mold with his fingers, the little girl laying it in, and then both together smoothed the earth over it. "You must not take it up again tomorrow to see if it has taken root," she said. "One must never do that! I did so with my flowers, but only twice; I wanted to see if they were growing, I did not know any better, and the flowers died."

The flower pot was left with Anthony, and he looked at it every morning all through the winter, but still saw nothing but the black mold. Spring came, the sun shone warmly, and now two tiny green leaves peeped forth. "One for me, and one for Maddalena," thought Anthony; "that is charming!" Soon appeared a third leaf—who was that for? Another followed, and another: every week, every day, it grew bigger and bigger; the plant became a tree.

And all this was seen reflected as it were in that single bright tear that flowed forth and vanished so soon; but more tears like this could gush forth from the fountain, even old Anthony's heart.

Near Eisenach stretches a chain of rocky mountains; one of these has a peculiar round form, and is completely bare of trees, bushes, or grass; it is called the Venus Mountain, for within it dwells Lady Venus, a woman-goddess of heathen times. Every child in Eisenach knows that Lady Venus, or Lady Holle—for she is known by both names—dwells here, and that once she allured into her abode that noble knight Tannhäuser, a "minnesinger" belonging to the minstrel band at Wartburg.

Anthony and little Maddalena often played near this mountain, and once she said to him, "Anthony, darest thou knock at the mountain and

say, 'Lady Venus, Lady Venus, open! Tannhäuser is here!'" No, Anthony dared not; Maddalena dared. But only the first few words, "Lady Venus, Lady Venus!" did she speak out boldly and loud, the rest seemed to die away on her lips, and Anthony was sure she had not really spoken them out. And yet she had her bold look, just as she had when sometimes she and other little girls met him in the garden and they all wanted to kiss him, because they knew he did not like to be kissed. "I will," she would say, and Anthony never objected to anything she chose to do. She was so pretty, as well as clever and bold. But there are different kinds of beauty. Lady Venus in the mountain was beautiful, folks said, but it was a wild alluring beauty given by the evil spirit; a very different beauty was that of the holy Elizabeth, the pious Thuringian princess, whose deeds of love and mercy were still remembered by the peasantry around. Her picture hung in the chapel, lighted by silver lamps; she was the protecting saint of the country. But Maddalena was not like her.

The apple tree that the children had planted grew year by year, so that soon it had to be transplanted into the garden; there the dew fell on it, the sun shone warmly on it, and gave it strength to endure the winter. And when winter was past, and spring had returned, it seemed as though it put forth its blossoms purely from joy, because the cold season was gone. And when autumn came, it bore two apples, one for Maddalena, one for Anthony.

And Maddalena grew up quickly, like the apple tree, and her face was as bright and fresh as its blossoms; but not much longer might Anthony enjoy the sight of his fairest flower. Changes came; Maddalena and her father left their old home for a new one. In our time, by the help of steam, the journey might be made in a few hours, but then it took more than a whole day and night to get from Eisenach to the town which is still called Weimar. When they parted, Maddalena wept as well as Anthony, and she declared she loved him better than all the splendors of Weimar.

One year passed away—two, three years passed away; and in the course of those three years two letters came from her; the first was brought by the carrier, the second by a traveler; the way was long and tedious, with many windings, past different towns.

Often had Anthony and Maddalena listened to the old story of "Tristram and Isolde" and always, when he heard it, had Anthony fancied himself and Maddalena in their case. Only the name of Tristram, meaning "one born in sorrow," suited not him, he thought, neither would he ever be like Tristram in imagining that she whom he loved had forgotten him. That was so unjust! for Isolde never did forget Tristram, and when both were dead, and buried on opposite sides of the

church, the lime trees that sprang from their graves would meet over the church roof, entwining their boughs in flowers and sweet odors. That story was so pretty, yet so sad, Anthony thought; but sad should not be his and Maddalena's history, and then he would whistle a song by Walter von der Vogelweide, the minnesinger. "Under the lime tree on the heath," it began, and the burden was so pretty.

*"Out in the wood, in the quiet dale,
Tandaradai!
Sang so sweetly the nightingale."*

This was his favorite song, and O! how he sang and whistled it all through the bright moonlight night as he rode along through the deep hollow way, on the road to Weimar, to pay a visit to Maddalena. He had not been invited; he chose to take her by surprise.

He was welcomed with good cheer and good wine, pleasant company, a comfortable room and warm bed—and yet it was not as he had pictured it. He understood neither himself nor his friends; but we can understand it easily! One can so often stay in a family without taking root in it; one talks, as one talks in a post chaise; knows the people, as one can know them on a steamboat; mutual annoyance increases, one wishes either one's self or one's good neighbor right away. Something of this felt Anthony.

"I am an honest girl," said Maddalena to him, "and I will tell thee the truth. Many things have changed since the time when we were together, a couple of children—changed both within us and without us. We cannot make our hearts keep the same; it is impossible. Anthony! I don't want to make thee my enemy—but soon I shall be far away from here. Believe me, I like thee well enough, but love thee, in the way I now know I can love another, that I cannot—I never have loved thee thus! Thou wilt get reconciled to it. Farewell, Anthony!"

And Anthony bade her farewell—he took his leave without a tear. The red-hot bar of iron and the frozen bar of iron alike bite the skin off our lips, if we kiss it; Anthony felt wild with hate now, as before with love.

It did not take Anthony anything like the four-and-twenty hours to ride home to Eisenach, but the poor horse he rode was ruined by his fierce haste. "What matter?" said he; "I am ruined, and I will ruin everything that can remind me of her: Lady Venus, the false heathen! As for the apple tree, I will tear it up by the roots; never shall it bloom or bear fruit again!"

But the apple tree was not laid low; he was himself laid low—brought to his bed by fever. How should he ever be raised up again? A medicine was sent him, the bitterest that could be found, but with nower

to brace the sick body and shrinking spirit. For Anthony's father was now no longer the rich merchant. Heavy days of trial stood waiting at the door; misfortune rushed in; like a flood it streamed upon the once rich house. The father was now a poor man; sorrow and anxiety palsied him, and Anthony had soon other things to think of besides love-sorrow and wrath against Maddalena. He had to be father and mother both in the house, to arrange, help, work for his bread.

He went to Bremen, and there endured many dreary days of hunger and bitterness, and these either harden or soften the heart. How different was the world of real men and women from the world he had imagined in his childhood! What now to him were the strains of the minnesingers? Mere moonshine! So he felt sometimes, but sometimes also the old songs he had been wont to love seemed to echo in his soul and did him good, made him gentler and more submissive. "God's will is best," he would then say within himself. "Good was it that our Lord would not suffer Maddalena's heart to cling to me, for where would it have ended, now that fortune has turned against me? I am glad she gave me up before she had heard of this change. Our Lord has been merciful toward me; all has been for the best, all things are ordered wisely. And she could not help herself; I was unjust to feel so bitter and wrathful!"

Years went on; Anthony's father was dead, and strangers now dwelt in the old house where he was born. Yet Anthony was to see his home once more, for his rich master sent him on a journey that obliged him to pass through Eisenach. Old Wartburg stood unchanged on the rock; the great oak trees kept their places, the Venus Mountain gleamed gray in its barrenness, as of old. These words sprang to Anthony's lips: "Lady Venus! Lady Venus! open the mountain and take me in! then I shall at least stay in my own land!"

It was a sinful thought, and he hastily crossed himself. A little bird was singing from a bush close by; it reminded him of the old song—

Far in the wood, in the quiet dale,

Tawlaradai!

How sweetly sang the nightingale.

It was through a veil of tears that he now again saw the home of his childhood. The house stood exactly as before, but the garden had been laid out afresh, and a road now cut across a corner of the old garden ground, so that the apple tree, which he had never destroyed, now stood outside the inclosure. The sun shone on it, and the dew fell on it, as formerly; it bore rich fruit, and bowed its branches almost to the earth. "It thrives!" quoth he; "that's well." But on closer inspection, he saw that rude hands had broken off one of the largest

boughs; the tree stood too near the highroad. "They tear off the blossoms, without one word of thanks; they steal the fruit and break off the branches; one might repeat concerning this tree, as concerning many a human being—

*"At this tree's cradle who could say
That such would be its fate one day?"*

Its history began so prettily, and now it is forsaken and forgotten, a garden tree by the highroad! quite out of place, and ill-treated thus! Well, it will not pine away and die, but every year the blossoms will be fewer, and of fruit there will soon be none—no matter, the history will not be a long one!"

Such were Anthony's musings under the apple tree, and very similar were his nightly thoughts in the tiny, lonesome chamber in the Street of Small Houses, in the foreign Danish land, whither his rich master, a merchant of Bremen, had sent him, under condition that he was not to marry. "Marry, indeed! ho, ho!" and he laughed a strange inward laugh.

The winter came early one year, a sharp frost set in, and a violent snowstorm kept every one indoors who was not obliged to go out. Thus it happened that Anthony's neighbors took no note of his booth having been shut up for two whole days. During those two days old Anthony had never left his bed; he had not the strength, and the intense cold had benumbed his limbs. All forsaken lay the old bachelor; he could not help himself, he could only just reach the water pitcher beside his bed, and now the last drop had been exhausted. It was not fever, it was not sickness; it was old age that had prostrated him thus. It was almost continual night around him, for the days were dark and gray, and his window was not like a glass window. A little spider, unseen, unknown to him, spun contentedly and diligently her web over him, as though to prepare a little fine new crape for mourning, in case the old man's eyes should close in death.

Long and dreary were the hours; tears had he none, neither had he pain. Maddalena was no longer in his thoughts; he felt that the tumult of the world was past for him, that he lay somewhere beyond it, that no one thought of him. For a while he seemed to feel hunger and thirst—O! that was painful! but no one came to help him—no one would come. He thought on others who had suffered the like; he remembered the patron saint of his birthplace, the gentle St. Elizabeth, who, when her people were pining because of the famine, went about bringing help and refreshment to the sick. He remembered the pious words of hope and trust in God that she had been wont to speak to those poor sufferers; how she had bathed their wounds and brought food to the hungry, although her stern husband forbade her with angry

words. He remembered the legend, how as she glided along with a basket well packed with bread and meat, her husband, who was watching her footsteps, suddenly stepped forward and asked in wrath, "what it was she carried in her basket?" And she replied in terror: "These are roses I have gathered in the garden"; whereupon he tore back the cloth laid over the basket, and lo! a miracle! for bread and meat were changed into the loveliest roses!

Thus lived the gentle Duchess of Thuringia in old Anthony's thoughts, thus she stood vividly before his failing eyesight, beside his bed in the miserable wooden booth in the strangers' land. He uncovered his head, looked into her kind eyes, and all around him sprang up a bower of sweet roses, so fair to look on, and so fragrant! And now he was conscious of another, a different perfume; a flowering apple tree stood before him, the same that he and little Maddalena had planted.

And the tree drooped its fragrant petals upon his hot forehead, and their touch cooled it; they fell upon his thirsting lips, and seemed to strengthen him like wine; they drooped upon his breast, and he felt so much easier.

"Now I shall fall asleep," said he to himself. "Sleep will do me so much good, I shall get up tomorrow all right again. O, how beautiful! The apple tree planted in love! I see it now in glory!" And he fell asleep.

The next day—it was the third day that his booth had been shut up—the snow ceased, and old Anthony's opposite neighbor came to look after him. There he lay, stretched out dead, holding his old nightcap between his clasped hands. But another was found laid by, white and clean, ready for him to wear in his coffin.

And where were now the tears he had shed! where were the pearls? They were left in his nightcap—the genuine ones do not get lost in the washing—with the cap they remained; the old thoughts, the old dreams, all were left in the old bachelor's nightcap. Never wish such a one for thyself! it will make thy forehead too hot, thy pulse to beat too fast, will bring dreams as vivid as reality. This was experienced by the burgomaster, who, fifty years after old Anthony's death, chanced to put his nightcap on; he was a comfortable, well-to-do man, with a wife and eleven children; nevertheless, he dreamt straightway of unrequited love, bankruptcy, and hard fare.

"Ugh! how hot this nightcap makes one!" he exclaimed, and tore it off. One pearl after another trickled down and glittered before his eyes. "I must be ill!" declared the burgomaster; "my eyes feel quite dazzled! Can this be gout, I wonder?"

He knew not that what he saw were tears, shed half a hundred years ago—shed by old Anthony of Eisenach.

As for the visions and dreams of those several unhappy ones who have

worn the nightcap since, we will leave others to tell the tale, or rather the tales, for there must be many of them; we have now told the first, and with these words we conclude: Never wish for thyself the old bachelor's nightcap.

"SOMETHING"

I WILL BE Something," declared the eldest of five brothers; "I will be of use in the world; be it ever so humble a position that I may hold, let me be but useful, and that will be Something. I will make bricks; folk cannot do without them, so I shall at least do Something."

"Something very little, though," replied the second brother. "Why, it is as good as nothing! it is work that might be done by a machine. Better be a mason, as I intend to be. Then one belongs to a guild, becomes a citizen, has a banner of one's own. Nay, if all things go well, I may become a master, and have apprentices and workmen under me. That will be Something!"

"It will be nothing at all then, I can tell you that!" rejoined the third. "Think how many different ranks there are in a town far above that of a master mason. You may be an honest sort of a man, but you will never be a gentleman: gentle and simple; those are the two grand divisions, and you will always be one of the 'simple.' Well, I know better than that. I will be an architect; I will be one of the thinkers, the artists; I will raise myself to the aristocracy of intellect. I may have to begin from the very lowest grade; I may begin as a carpenter's boy, and run about with a paper cap on my head, to fetch ale for the workmen; I may not enjoy it, but I shall try to imagine it is only a masquerade. 'Tomorrow,' I shall say, 'I will go my own way, and others shall not come near me.' Yes, I shall go to the Academy, learn to draw, and be called an architect. That will be Something! I may get a title, perhaps; and I shall build and build, as others before me have done. Yes, that will be Something!"

"But it is Something that I care nothing about," said the fourth. "I should not care to go oh, on, in the beaten track, to be a mere copyist; I will be a genius, cleverer than all of you put together; I will create a new style, provide ideas for buildings suited to the climate and materials of our country, suited to our national character, and the requirements of the age."

"But supposing the climate and the materials don't agree?" suggested the fifth, "how will you get on then, if they won't co-operate? As for

our national character, to be following out that in architecture will be sheer affectation, and the requirements of modern civilization will drive you perfectly mad. I see you will none of you ever be anything, though of course you won't believe me. But do as you please, I shall not be like you. I shall reason over what you execute; there is something ridiculous in everything; I shall find it out, show you your faults—that will be Something!"

And he kept his word; and folk said of this fifth brother, "There is something in him, certainly; he has plenty of brains! but he does nothing." But he was content, he was Something.

But what became of the five brothers? We will hear the whole.

The eldest brother, the brickmaker, found that every brick he turned out whole yielded him a tiny copper coin—only copper—but a great many of these small coins, added together, could be converted into a bright silver dollar, and through the power of this, wherever he knocked, whether at baker's, butcher's, or tailor's, the door flew open, and he received what he wanted. Such was the virtue of his bricks; some, of course, got broken before they were finished, but a use was found even for these. For up by the trench, would poor Mother Margaret vain build herself a little house, if she might; she took all the broken bricks, aye, and she got a few whole ones besides, for a good heart had the eldest brother, though only a brickmaker. The poor thing built her house with her own hands; it was very narrow, its one window was all on one side, the door was too low, and the thatch on the roof might have been laid on better, but it gave her shelter and a home, and could be seen far over the sea, which sometimes burst over the trench in its might, and sprinkled a salt shower over the little house, which kept its place there years after he who made the bricks was dead and gone.

As for the second brother, he learned to build after another fashion, as he had resolved. When he was out of his apprenticeship, he buckled on his knapsack, and started, singing as he went, on his travels. He came home again, and became a master in his native town; he built, house after house, a whole street of houses; there they stood, looked well, and were a credit to the town; and these houses soon built him a little house for himself. How? Ask the houses, and they will give you no answer; but the people will answer you and say, "Why, of course, the street built him his house!" It was small enough, and had only a clay floor, but when he and his bride danced over it, the floor grew as smooth as if it had been polished, and from every stone in the wall sprung a flower, that looked as gay as the costliest tapestry. It was a pretty house and a happy wedded pair. The banner of the Masons' Guild waved outside, and workmen and apprentices shouted "Hurra!"

Yes, that was Something! and at last he died—that, too, was Something!

Next comes the architect, the third brother. He began as a carpenter's apprentice, and ran about the town on errands, wearing a paper cap; but he studied industriously at the Academy, and rose steadily upward. If the street full of houses had built a house for his brother the mason, the street took its name from the architect; the handsomest house in the whole street was his—that was Something, and he was Something! His children were gentlemen, and could boast of their "birth"; and when he died, his widow was a widow of condition—that is Something—and his name stood on the corner of the street, and was in everybody's lips—that is Something, too!

Now for the genius, the fourth brother, who wanted to invent something new, something original. Somehow, the ground gave way beneath his feet; he fell and broke his neck. But he had a splendid funeral, with music and banners, and flowery paragraphs in the newspapers; and three eulogiums were pronounced over him, each longer than the last, and this would have pleased him mightily, for he loved speechifying of all things. A monument was erected over his grave, only one story high—but that is Something!

So now he was dead, as well as his three elder brothers; the youngest, the critic, outlived them all, and that was as it should be, for thus he had the last word, which to him was a matter of the greatest importance. "He had plenty of brains," folk said. Now his hour had struck, he died, and his soul sought the gates of heaven. There it stood side by side with another soul—old Mother Margaret from the trenches.

"It is for the sake of contrast, I suppose, that I and this miserable soul should wait here together," thought the critic. "Well now, who are you, my good woman?" he inquired.

And the old woman replied, with as much respect as though St. Peter himself were addressing her—in fact, she took him for St. Peter, he gave himself such grand airs—"I am a poor old soul, I have no family, I am only old Margaret from the house near the trenches."

"Well, and what have you done down below?"

"I have done as good as nothing in the world! nothing whatever! It will be mercy, indeed, if such as I am suffered to pass through this gate."

"And how did you leave the world?" inquired the critic, carelessly. He must talk about something; it wearied him to stand there, waiting.

"Well, I can hardly tell how I left it; I have been sickly enough during these last few years, and could not well bear to creep out of bed at all during the cold weather. It has been a severe winter, but now that is all past. For a few days, as your highness must know, the wind was quite still, but it was bitterly cold; the ice lay over the water as far as one

could see. All the people in the town were out on the ice; there was dancing, and music, and feasting, and sled racing, I fancy; I could hear something of it all as I lay in my poor little chamber. And when it was getting toward evening, the moon was up, but was not yet very bright; I looked from my bed through the window, and I saw how there rose up over the sea a strange white cloud; I lay and watched it, watched the black dot in it, which grew bigger and bigger, and then I knew what it foreboded; that sign is not often seen, but I am old and experienced. I knew it, and I shivered with horror! Twice before in my life have I seen that sign, and I knew that there would be a terrible storm and a spring flood; it would burst over the poor things on the ice, who were drinking, and dancing, and merrymaking. Young and old, the whole town was out on the ice; who was to warn them, if no one saw it, or no one knew what I knew? I felt so terrified, I felt all alive, as I had not felt for years! I got out of bed, forced the window open; I could see the folk running and dancing over the ice; I could see the gay-colored flags. I could hear the boys shout 'Hurra!' and the girls and lads a-singing. All were so merry; and all the time the white cloud with its black speck rose higher and higher! I screamed as loud as I could; but no one heard me, I was too far off. Soon would the storm break loose, the ice would break in pieces, and all that crowd would sink and drown. Hear me they could not; get out to them I could not; what was to be done? Then our Lord sent me a good thought; I could set fire to my bed; better let my house be burnt to the ground, than that so many should miserably perish. So I kindled a light; I saw the red flame mount up; I got out at the door, but then I fell down; I lay there, I could not get up again. But the flames burst out through the window and over the roof; they saw it down below, and they all ran as fast as they could to help me; the poor old crone they believed would be burnt; there was not one who did not come to help me. I heard them come, and I heard, too, such a rustling in the air, and then a thundering as of heavy cannon shots, for the spring flood was loosening the ice, and it all broke up. But the folk were all come off it to the trenches, where the sparks were flying about me; I had them all safe. But I could not bear the cold and the fright, and that is how I have come up here. Can the gates of heaven be opened to such a poor old creature as I? I have no house now at the trenches; where can I go, if they refuse me here?"

Then the gates opened, and the Angel bade poor Margaret enter. As she passed the threshold, she dropped a blade of straw—straw from her bed—that bed which she had set alight to save the people on the ice, and lo! it had changed into gold! dazzling gold! yet flexible withal, and twisting into various forms.

"Look, that was what yonder poor woman brought," said the Angel.

"But what dost thou bring? Truly, I know well that thou hast done nothing, not even made bricks. It is a pity thou canst not go back again to fetch at least one brick—not that it is good for anything when it is made, no, but because anything, the very least, done with a good will, is Something. But thou mayst not go back, and I can do nothing for thee."

Then poor Margaret pleaded for him thus: "His brother gave me all the bricks and broken bits wherewith I built my poor little house—that was a great kindness toward a poor old soul like me! May not all those bits and fragments, put together, be reckoned as one brick for him? It will be an act of mercy; he needs it, and this is the home of mercy."

"To thy brother, whom thou didst despise," said the Angel, "to him whose calling, in respect of worldly honor, was the lowest, shalt thou owe this mite of heavenly coin. Thou shalt not be sent away; thou shalt have leave to stand here without, and think over thy manner of life down below. But within thou canst not enter, until thou hast done something that is good—Something!"

"I fancy I could have expressed that better," thought the critic; but he did not say it aloud, and that was already—Something!

THE HORNBOOK*

THERE WAS a certain man who set himself to writing new doggerel for the Hornbook—two lines to every letter, as in the old one: he fancied the old rhymes were too hackneyed, and that something new was needed for the rising generation. His new Hornbook was as yet only in manuscript, and he had placed it by the side of the old printed one, in the great bookcase, full of such a multitude of books, some learned, others mere books of amusement. But the old Hornbook would not peaceably endure the new Hornbook as a neighbor; he had sprung down from the shelf, giving his rival a push that stretched him on the floor, scattering the loose leaves all about. As for the old Hornbook, he lay open at his first page, the most important of all, where stand displayed all the letters, large and small. That page contains within it the essence of all the books that ever were written: it contains the alphabet, the wonderful army of signs that rule the world: a marvelous power, in sooth, have they! It all depends on the order in which they are commanded to stand; they have power to give life or take it away, to glad-

* Formerly, a child's primer.

den or to sadden. Individually they mean nothing; but marshaled, ranked in order by a mighty chieftain, what can they not effect?

And now, there they lay, turned upward, and the Cock which was pictured at the beginning of the alphabet beamed out with feathers, red, blue, and green. Proudly he bridled up and ruffled his plumes, for he knew how great was the power of the letters, how honorable his position.

So, finding the old Hornbook had fallen open, he flapped his wings, flew forth, and perched on a corner of the bookcase; there he plumed himself with his beak, and crowed long and loud. Every single book among them all—and they were all wont to stand night and day as in a trance, so long as no one was reading them—every single book was roused by his trumpet call; and then, when they were all wide awake, the Cock spoke out loudly and clearly about the insult that had been shown toward the worthy, venerable old Hornbook.

"Everything is to be new nowadays," he complained; "children are so wise now, they can read before they have learnt the alphabet. 'O, they want something new!' declared the man who wrote those stupid new verses that now lie sprawling on the floor. I know them well enough; more than ten times over have I heard him read them aloud, he admired them so much. Saving his presence, I prefer my own, the good old rhymes, with Xanthus for X, and with pictures belonging to them. I will fight for them; I will crow for them! Every book in the bookcase knows them well. But I will just read out these absurd new rhymes. I will try and read them patiently, and then I know we shall all agree that they are good for nothing:—

"A—Air

The Air spreads round us far and wide,
Above us, and on every side.

"Could anything be more insipid?" commented the Cock. "But I will go on—

"B—Bear; Boat

The Bear roams lonely; lo, a Boat;
Men hunt him for his good warm coat.

"C—Columbus

Columbus seeks America's shore,
And the earth grows twice as large as before.

"D—Denmark

Denmark is a bonnie land;
God shield it with protecting hand!

"Now, that is just what some folk will consider so fine and patriotic," quoth the Cock. "I don't; I can find nothing fine here. No matter—

"E—Elephant

The Elephant walks with a stately stride,
Crushing the jungle on either side.

"F—Fair

Fantastic sights are in the Fair;
Let us see the monkeys and dancing bear.

"G—Gold

Gold! gold! bright red gold!
Heavy to win, and light to hold.

"I have heard something very like that before," objected the Cock—

"H—Hurra

Hurra! 'tis an easy word to say:
But where is the deed that deserves hurra?

"I should like to know how many children will understand that!" exclaimed the Cock. "I suppose they will put on the title page, 'Hornbook for Big People and Little'; but the big folk have something else to do besides reading Hornbook rhymes, and the little ones won't be able to understand them. There are limits to everything. Well, what now?"

"I—Iceland; Island; Ida; Isaac

Iceland, an Island, lies in the sea;
And Ida and Isaac shall go there with me.

"Perfectly absurd!" declared the Cock—

"K—Kitten; Kitchen; Knitting

Whilst in the Kitchen we were sitting,
That frolicsome Kitten tangled my Knitting.

"As bad as the last!" interjected the Cock. "I don't approve of double rhymes—

"L—Lion; Land

Slowly the Lion paces the sand,
With solemn step, in the Nubian Land.

"M—Morning

Duly this Morning the sun uprose,
But not for the noisy cock's loud crows.

"Personalities!" exclaimed the Cock; "coarse enough, too. But, thank you, good man, I am in tolerable company; I don't object to being named along with the sun. Let's try a little further—

"N—Negro; Night

Black as a Negro, black as Night;
For where is the soap that can wash him white?

"O—Olive

The best of all leaves, which is it?—I know!
The dove's own Olive begins with an O.

"P—Patience

Patience, Prudence, Peace, and Plenty,
Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty.

"Q—Queen

A quiet Queen went in quest of a Quill,
For aught I know she is seeking it still.

"R—River; Reeds

The rapid River runs along,
Reeds and Rushes list his song.

"S—Swine

Proclaim it not, though all the Swine
That in the forest feed were thine.

"Bear with me, my friends!" said the Cock. "I really must stop and crow a little. It tries one's strength, reading so long: I must get breath." And then he crowed, shrill as a brass trumpet; it must have been a real pleasure—for the Cock, at least, he always enjoyed it. Then he went on—

"T—Tea kettle; Tea urn

The Tea kettle doth to the kitchen belong,
Yet the Tea urn sings not a better song.

"U—Upsal

Upsal is a stately town,
In the map you'll find the name set down.

"V W—Vine; Wine

O, graceful doth twine the bonnie green Vine,
And from its juice we make good Wine.

"Now, it is quite impossible," quoth the Cock, "that he can have found anything new for X instead of Xanthus. Nay, what have we here?

"X—Xantippe

The sea of marriage has rocks of strife,
As Socrates found with Xantippe, his wife.

"Well, let him take Xantippe, if he likes. He is welcome. Xanthus was ever so much better—

"Y—Ygdrasil

Under Ygdrasil tree—an ash, they say—
Sat the gods in council every day;
But the tree is dead, and the gods are fled.

"What business had he to make a third line of it? Who wanted more than two, I wonder? And understand it I don't. But here we come to the last: that's a comfort—

"Z—Zephyr

Sweet Zephyr, the gentle wind from the west,
O, that is the breeze that I love the best!

"Well there's an end of it—in one sense, at least; I wish we could hear the end of it in the other sense. But, no! it will be printed and sold and read, instead of the noble old rhymes in my book. What says the assembly, learned and unlearned, collectively and individually? What says the alphabet? I have spoken; now let others act!"

The books stood still; the bookcase stood still; but the Cock flew back to his place at great C in the old Hornbook, and looked proudly around. "I have spoken well—I have crowed well! The new Hornbook can do nothing like it. It will die of a certainty; it is dead already—it has no Cock!"

THE THORNY PATH OF HONOR

THERE IS an old romance called "The Thorny Path of Honor, that was trodden by a huntsman named Bryde, who came to great honor and dignity, but not till after manifold adversities, and much peril of life." Many a one of us has heard the tale in childhood, and perchance read it in later years, and thought of his own unrecorded "thorny path" and "manifold adversities." Romance and reality are so much alike, but romance has its happy ending here on earth, whilst reality more often delays it, and refers us to time and eternity.

The world's history is a magic lantern, throwing pictures of light on

the dark backgrounds of the ages; to show us how the benefactors of mankind, the martyrs of progress, have trodden "The Thorny Path of Honor."

From all times, from all lands, stand out these dazzling pictures; each picture a moment only, yet a whole life, a lifetime with its struggles and triumphs. Let us glance here and there at a few in the martyr ranks; these ranks that will never be filled till the earth melts away.

Behold a crowded theatre: the *Clouds* of Aristophanes are sending streams of mirth and mockery for the populace; the stage of Athens makes a laughingstock, both body and mind, of her foremost man, who stood between the people and the Thirty Tyrants—he who in the battle fray rescued Alcibiades and Xenophor, he whose spirit soared above the old world deities, is here himself in person. He has risen among the spectators, and stands forward from the benches, that the laughing Athenians may see whether he and the stage caricature of him are like each other; there he stands erect before them, and in spirit high above them.

O green, juicy, poisonous hemlock! be thou, and not the olive tree, the shadowy background of this Athens.

Seven cities claimed to be Homer's birthplace, that is to say, when he was dead. See him in his lifetime! he wanders through these very cities, reciting his verses for his livelihood. Thought for the morrow grizzles his hair. He, the mightiest of seers, is blind and lonely; the sharp thorn rends the mantle of the poet king.

His songs live still; and in them alone live the gods and heroes of old.

Picture upon picture billows forth from the morning land and the evening land, far removed by time and space, and yet all from the same thorny path, where the thistle never bears flower till it can only serve to deck the grave.

From under the palm trees come camels, laden with indigo and other precious things; they are sent by the lord of the land to him whose lays are the people's delight, the country's pride. He whom spite and slander drove into exile, is found again. The caravan draws near the little town where he has taken refuge. A poor corpse is being brought out of the gate: this stops the caravan. The dead is the very man they seek, Firdusi—ended is "The Thorny Path of Honor."

Yonder sits an African, snub-nosed, blubber-lipped, and woolly haired, on the marble steps of the palace in Portugal's capital, and begs; that is the faithful slave of Camöens. If it were not for him, and the coppers that are thrown him, his master, the singer of the "Iusiad," might have starved to death. Now there stands a costly monument on the grave of Camöens.

Yet another picture. Behind iron bars may be seen a man with long

and matted beard. "I have made an invention," he cries, "the greatest for centuries; and they have kept me for more than twenty years caged up here." "Who is he?" "A lunatic," says the keeper. What craze may not befall a man? he thinks that people could get along by steam! It is Solomon de Caus, the discover of steam power. His prescient words have not been clear enough for a Richelieu, and he dies imprisoned in a madhouse.

Here stands Columbus, whom once the street boys pursued and hooted, because he would discover a new world. He has discovered it. The bells of jubilee ring at his triumphant return; but soon the bells of envy sound louder still. The world discoverer, he who raised the American gold land above ocean, and gave it to his king, is rewarded with iron chains; he desires them to be laid in his coffin, to mark how a man is valued by his own age.

Picture throngs upon picture; rich is the Thorny Path of Honor.

Here in murky gloom sits he who measured the heights of the moon mountains; he who burst his way forth into space, among planets and stars; Galileo, the mighty one, who could see and hear the earth beneath him turning round. Blind and deaf he sits now, in his old age, suffering tortures of pain and privation, hardly able to lift his foot—that foot which once in mental agony, when the words of truth were blotted out, he stamped on the earth, crying, "Still it moves!"

Here stands a woman with a childlike heart, a creature of impulse and faith. She bears the banner before the warrior host, and brings victory and freedom to her fatherland. The jubilee sounds; the bale fire kindles; Joan of Arc, the witch, is burned at the stake. Yea, the coming age will spit upon the white lily; Voltaire, wit's own satyr, will sing of *La Pucelle*.

At the Viborg-Thing the Danish nobles are burning the king's laws. They burst into flames that light up both age and lawgiver, and send a flash of glory into yon dark donjon-tower. Yonder he sits, gray-haired, bent double, furrowing the stone table with his fingers; he once ruled over three kingdoms, the popular chief, the burghers' and peasants' friend, Christian the Second; he of the hard will in the hard age. Enemies wrote his history. Seven-and-twenty years of prison, let us remember, whenever we are reminded of his blood-guiltiness.

There sails a ship from Denmark; there stands a man by the tall mast; he looks upon Hoen for the last time; Tycho Brahe, who raised Denmark's name to the stars, and was repaid with scathe and scorn, is setting forth on his way to a foreign land. "Heaven is everywhere, what want I more?" such are his words; and away he sails, our most famous man, sure in foreign lands of being honored and free.

"Free! ah, if only free from the intolerable pains of this body!"

sighs a voice of the bygone age to us. What a picture! Griffenfeldt, the Danish Prometheus, fettered to Mumkholm's rocky isle.

We are in America, by one of the large rivers; crowds of people have gathered, a ship is to sail against wind and tide, to be a power against the elements. Robert Fulton is the name of him who thinks he can do this. The ship begins its course, suddenly it stops; the crowd laughs, whistles, and whoops, his own father whoops with them. "Presumption! madness! he has got his deserts; lock him up, the wiseacre!" Then clicks a small nail, which for a moment had stopped the machinery; the wheels work the paddles round, break the opposition of the waves—the ship sails.

Steam's weaver-shuttle turns hours into minutes between the lands of the world.

Mankind, canst thou realize the bliss of such a moment of assurance, when the soul perceives its mission? That moment, when the sorest wounds from the Thorny Path of Honor—though one's own fault may have caused them—are healed, are forgotten in spiritual health, and strength, and freedom. When all discords melt into harmony; and men acknowledge a revelation of God's grace, vouchsafed to one alone, and by him made known to all.

Then the Thorny Path of Honor shines like a glory round the earth. Happy he who is chosen to be a pilgrim thereon, and without any merit of his own, to be made one of the master builders of the bridge between God and man.

The Genius of History wings his mighty way throughout the ages, and gives us comfort and good cheer, and thoughtful calm of mind, by showing, in sunbright pictures upon murky backgrounds, the Thorny Path of Honor: not a path that ends, like a fairy tale, in gladness and glitter here on earth, but one that points onward, and upward, far away into time and eternity.

THE DAYS OF THE WEEK

WE WILL also have a good time for once," said the Days of the Week; "we will come together and have a feast." But every one of the seven Days was so much occupied all the year round, that they had not a free moment left for enjoyment. They wanted to have a whole day to themselves, and such a day they get every four years in the intercalary day; this day is placed at the end of February, for the purpose of bringing order in the account of time.

And on this inserted day they decided to meet together, and hold their feast. February being the month of carnivals, they agreed to come together in a carnival fashion, every one dressed according to his profession and destination; have the best things to eat, and drink the best wines, make speeches, and tell each other the most agreeable and most disagreeable things in unrestrained fellowship. The Norse heroes had a custom, in the good old times, of shying the bones, which they had cleared of all the meat, at each other's head; but the weekdays thought of throwing bombshells at each other with their mouths, in the form of scorching witticisms, such as might be in keeping with innocent carnival amusements.

And the twenty-ninth of February came in due time; with it they assembled.

Sunday, foreman of the weekdays, came first, dressed in a black silk cloak. The pious people mistook the cloak for a minister's gown. The worldly minded, however, saw that he was dressed in domino for a frolic, and that the full-blown carnation, which he wore in his button-hole, was nothing but a little red theatre lantern, which said, "No more tickets: standing room only; hope you will enjoy yourself."

Monday, a young mechanic, a distant relative of Sunday, and much given to pleasures, came next. No sooner did he hear the military music of the parade, than he rushed out, saying, "I must go and hear Offenbach's music; it does not go to my head, neither to the heart: but it itches in the muscles of my legs. I must dance, and have a swing with the girls, get me a blue eye, and then sleep upon it; the next day I go to work with new vigor: did you see the new moon of the week?"

Tuesday is Tyr's day, the day of strength. "Yes, that I am," said Tuesday. "I take hold of the work, fasten Mercury's wings to the merchant's boots, look after the factory, and see that the wheels are oiled, and turn easily. I also see to it that the tailor sits upon his table, and the street paver is by his paving stones. I hold everybody to his business, and have an eye upon them all, and therefore I appear among you in a policeman's uniform, and my name is 'Politics day.' If this is a bad joke, then you may think of a better one, every one of you."

"And now come I," said Wednesday. "I stand in the middle of the week; the Germans call me Mr. Midweek. I stand like a young clerk in a store, like a flower among the other honored days of the week. If we march up in file, then have I three days in front of me, and three days behind; they are my bodyguard: and I may with propriety say that I am the most prominent of all the days of the week."

And now Thursday came in, dressed up like a coppersmith, with a hammer and a copper kettle—token of his aristocratic descent. "I am of very high birth," said he. "In the northern countries I am named

after Thor, the god of thunder; and in the south, after Jupiter, the god of lightning; these two understood how to thunder and lighten, and that has remained in the family."

And then he beat his copper kettle, and thus proved his high descent.

Friday was dressed up like a young girl, who called herself Freia, the goddess of beauty of the North; for variety's sake she called herself Venus; that depended altogether on the language of the country in which she appeared. She was of a quiet, cheerful character, she said; but this was the odd day of the leap year, which gives liberty to woman, that she may, according to an old custom, propose to the man she likes, without waiting for him to propose to her.

Last came Saturday, waddling along like an old housekeeper, with broom, dustpan, and other cleansing articles. Her favorite dish was beer soup, but she was not particularly anxious to have it put on the table on that festive occasion.

And thus the weekdays held a banquet, as I have described them; here they are, ready for family use as tableaux. Of course you may improve upon them; we give them only as vignettes for February, the only month that receives a day in addition.

THE STORM MOVES THE SIGNBOARDS

IN OLDEN TIMES, when Grandfather was quite a little boy and wore red trousers and a red jacket, with a sash round his waist, and a feather in his cap—for thus in his childhood little boys were dressed when they were very smart—so many things were different from what they are now. There were often pageants in the street—such ones as we do not see nowadays, for these things are abolished: they became so old-fashioned; but pleasant it is to hear Grandfather tell of them.

It must indeed have been a show when the shoemakers moved signboards, when they changed Corporation Hall. On their waving silk banner were painted a large boot and a two-headed eagle; the younger journeymen, with red and white ribbons fluttering down from their shirt sleeves, carried the welcome cup and the box; the older ones wore drawn swords with lemons on the points. There was a full band, but the finest of all the instruments was "the Bird," as Grandfather called the long pole with the half-moon, with all its ringing, tingling, and dangling things—real Turkish music. It was lifted and swung, and it almost hurt the eyes to look at it when the sun shone upon all that gold, silver, and brass.

Before the procession ran Harlequin, in clothes made of patches of every possible color, and with black face, and bells on his head just like a sleigh horse; and he beat the people with his wand, that smacked without hurting, and they squeezed each other to get onward; little boys and girls fell over their own legs straight down into the gutters; while old dames elbowed their way, looking cross and scolding. Some laughed, others chatted; there were people on the steps and in the windows—nay, even on the roofs. The sun shone; now and then, indeed, a little rain fell, but that was a good thing for the farmer; and even if enough fell to make the people wringing wet, why, that was a true blessing to the land.

Ah! what things Grandfather could tell! He had, when a little boy seen all that grand show in its fullest splendor. The oldest journeyman of the Corporation delivered a speech from the scaffold where the signboard was hung out; the speech ran in verses just like a piece of poetry, which, indeed, it was; there had been three about it, and before making it, they had drunk a whole bowl of punch, so that it might be really good. And the people gave cheers for the speech, but still more cheers for the Harlequin when he appeared on the scaffold and mimicked the speaker. The fool did his foolery so capitally, and drank beer from drug-measuring glasses, which he then flung out among the people, who grasped them in the air. Grandfather had one of them, which the mortar mixer had caught and given him. It was fun, indeed. And the signboard hung, with flowers and wreaths, on the new Corporation Hall.

Such a sight, one never forgets, however old one becomes, Grandfather said; and he, indeed, never forgot it, though afterward he saw much show and grandeur and knew how to tell about it; but funniest of all it was, when he told of the moving of the signboards in the great city.

Grandfather had been there with his parents while he was a little boy; and that was the first time he saw the largest town of the country.

Such a number of people were in the streets, that he thought the "Moving of the Signboards" was just then going on; and there were many signboards to be moved: one might have filled hundreds of rooms with these pictures if they had been hung up inside instead of outdoors. Thus, there were all kinds of garments painted where the tailors lived; they could change people till they became genteel instead of vulgar. There were tobacconists' signboards with the most charming little boys, smoking cigars, just as they do in reality; there were signboards with butter and red herrings, clergymen's ruffs, and coffins; and besides there were other signboards with inscriptions and announcements. Indeed, one might go for a whole day up and down the streets and be gratified by looking at pictures; and then at the same time one learned what

people those were who lived inside: they had themselves hung their signs outside; and this is a very good thing, Grandfather said: in a large town it is so instructive to know what is indoors.

Well, then, that funny affair with the signboards happened just as Grandfather came to town; he said so himself, and he was not then thinking of any mischief, as mother used to say he was when he wanted to make a fool of me—he looked quite trustworthy.

The first night after he had come to the great town, there was as awful weather as has ever been told about in the papers—such weather as there had not been within the memory of man. All the air was filled with tiles; old wooden fences were overturned; nay, there was a wheelbarrow that ran by itself along the street to save its life. There was a howling in the air, and a wailing and shaking; it was, indeed, a terrible storm. The water in the canal ran quite over the banks, not knowing where it dared be. The Storm went swooping over the town, taking the chimneys with him; more than one grand old church spire had to bend, and has never been quite right since.

There stood a sentry box before the house of the honest old captain of the firemen—he who was always the last with his engine; the Storm grudged him that little box, and it was flung down the steps, and rolled along the street; and then—strange to say—it arose and remained standing before the house where lived the poor carpenter's apprentice who saved the lives of three persons the last time there was a fire; but the sentry box did not mean anything by this. The barber's signboard—a large brazen dish—was pulled down and moved straight into the councilor's window recess; and this seemed almost like malice, said all the neighbors, who, with the most intimate lady friends of the family, called the mistress "the Razor"—she was so sharp, and knew more about people than they knew themselves.

A signboard with a rough-drawn dry stockfish flew straight on till it stood over the door of a house where lived a man who edited a newspaper. That was a poor joke of the Stormwind; he did not remember, I dare say, that a man who edits newspapers is not at all a person to be joked with: he is a king in his own paper and in his own opinion.

The Weathercock flew over to the roof of the opposite neighbor's house, and stayed there—in the blackest malice, the other neighbors said.

The barrel maker's cask got hung just under the sign for "Ladies' outfits."

The restaurant's bill of fare, which hung near the door in a heavy frame, was placed by the Storm just over the entrance to the theatre, where people never went; it was a funny bill: "Horseradish Soup and Farced Cabbage"; but then the people came.

The furrier's foxskin, which is his honest sign, was removed to the bellwire of the young man who always went to the early morning service, looking like an umbrella let down, followed the truth, and was "a pattern," his aunt said.

The inscription, "Establishment for Higher Education," was removed to the billiard club; and the establishment itself got the board inscribed, "Babies brought up by hand here": this was not at all witty—only naughty; but the Storm did it, and him we cannot control.

It was a terrible night; and—only think!—in the morning almost all the signboards in the town were moved; and in some cases it was done with so much malice, that Grandfather would not talk about them; but he laughed inwardly—that, I well saw, and perhaps he had then some mischievous thought.

The poor folks in the large town—especially those that were strangers—were quite puzzled to know "who was who"; and it could not be otherwise when they judged according to the signboards. Some folks who thought they were coming into a very grave meeting of elders, assembled to discuss the most important matters, came instead into a school, full of noisy boys, nearly jumping upon the desks.

There were folks who mistook the church for the theatre; and that is indeed dreadful!

Such a Storm has never blown in our time; it is only Grandfather who lived to witness it, and then he was quite a little one; such a Storm, perhaps, never will come in our time, but in our grandchildren's; and then we must indeed hope and pray that they may keep quiet while "the Storm moves the Signboards."

THE PORTER'S SON

THE GENERAL'S FAMILY lived on the drawing-room floor, the Porter's lived in the cellar. There was a great distance between the two families—the whole ground floor and the grades of society; but both lived under the same roof, and their windows looked out upon the street and the same yard. In this yard there was a blooming acacia—whenever it did bloom; and the smart nurse used to sit under it with the still smarter child, the General's "Little Emily." The Porter's little boy, with his large brown eyes and dark hair, used to dance bare-legged before them; and the child would laugh at him, and stretch her tiny hands to him; and if the General saw this from his window, he would nod down at them, and say, "*Charmant!*" The General's lady, who was

so young that she might almost have been her husband's daughter by an early marriage, never herself looked out of the window into the yard; but she had given orders that the cellar-people's boy might play about near her own child, but never touch it. The nurse kept strictly to her ladyship's orders.

And the sun shone in upon those on the drawing-room floor, and upon those in the cellar. The acacia put forth its blossoms; they fell off, and new ones came again next year. The tree bloomed, and the Porter's little boy bloomed; he looked quite like a fresh tulip.

The General's little daughter grew a delicate child, like the faint rosy leaf of the acacia blossom. She seldom came now under the tree; the fresh air she took in a carriage. She went with mamma for her drives, and she always nodded to the Porter's George; aye, and kissed her fingers at him, till her mother told her that she was now grown too big for that.

One morning he had to go up to the General's floor with the letters and newspapers which had been left at the Porter's lodge in the morning. When he had mounted the staircase, and was passing the door of the sand box, he heard something wailing inside it. He thought it was a stray chicken chirping to get out; and lo! it was the General's little daughter in muslin and lace!

"Don't tell papa and mamma; they will be so angry!"

"What is the matter, little lady?" asked George.

"It's burning all over!" said she; "it's burning and blazing!"

George opened the door to the little nursery; the window-curtain was nearly burned: the curtain rod had caught fire, and stood in flames. George sprang up, pulled it down, and called for help; without him there would have been a house on fire.

The General and her ladyship examined little Emily.

"I only just took one match," said she, "and that lighted up, and then the curtain lighted up. I spit all I could, but it was no good, and so I came out and hid myself, for papa and mamma would be so angry."

"Spit!" said the General; "what sort of word is that? When did you ever hear papa or mamma talk of spitting? That you have learned downstairs."

But little George got a penny. It did not go to the candy store, but into the savings box: and there were soon so many pennies that he could buy himself a paint box, and put color to his drawings; and of these he had many: they seemed to come out of his pencil and his finger ends. The first colored pictures were presented to little Emily.

"*Charmant!*" said the General. Her ladyship herself admitted that one could see clearly enough what the little one meant in his pictures. "There's genius in him!"

Such were the words which the Porter's wife brought down into the cellar.

The General and his lady were people of rank: they had two armorial shields on their carriage, one for each of them. Her ladyship had arms worked on every bit of clothing inside and out, on her nightcap, and on her night bag. This, her own shield, was a costly one, bought by her father for shining dollars; for he had not been born with it, no, nor she either; she had come into the world prematurely, seven years before the shield of arms; a fact that was remembered by most people, though not by the family. The General's shield was old and large; one's back might well creak with the dignity of this alone, to say nothing of two shields; and there was a creaking in the back of her ladyship, when stiff and stately she drove to the court-ball.

The General was old and gray, but sat well on horseback; he was quite aware of it, and rode out every day, with a groom at a respectful distance behind him. When he came to a party, it was just as if he came riding in on his high horse, and he wore orders enough to bewilder one; but that was not by any means *his* fault. As a very young man he had performed military duties, by taking a part in the great autumnal reviews, which used to be held in the piping days of peace. Of that time he had an anecdote to tell, the only one he had. His lieutenant cut off and took prisoner one of the princes; and the Prince with his little troop of soldiers, prisoners like himself, had to ride back to town behind the General. It was an event never to be forgotten, and the General told and retold it, year after year, always ending with the remarkable words which he had spoken when he returned the Prince's saber to him: "Only my lieutenant could have made your Royal Highness a prisoner, I myself—never!" and the Prince had answered: "Monsieur, you are incomparable!"

In active service the General had never been; for when the war went through his native land, he went on the diplomatic road, through three foreign countries. He talked the French language till he almost forgot his own; he danced well, he rode well, orders grew on his coat in indescribable profusion, the sentinels presented arms to him, one of the prettiest of girls presented herself to him—and she became the General's lady; and they had a pretty babe that seemed to have fallen from the sky, it was so pretty; and the Porter's son danced in the yard before it as soon as it could take notice, and gave it all his colored drawings; and it looked at them, and was delighted with them, and tore them to pieces. She was such a dear sweet little thing!

"My rose leaf!" said the General's lady, "thou art born to be a prince's bride!"

The Prince was already standing outside the door, though nobody knew of it. People cannot see much further than the doorstep.

"T'other day our George shared his bread and butter with her, that he did!" said the Porter's wife. "There was no cheese, nor yet meat with it; yet she relished it every bit as well as roast beef. There'd have been a fine to-do if some folks had seen the little feast; but they didn't see it."

George had shared bread and butter with little Emily; gladly would he have shared his heart with her. He was a good boy, clever and sprightly; and he now went to the evening school at the Academy in order to learn drawing thoroughly. Little Emily, too, made some progress in learning: she talked French with her "Bonne," and had a dancing-master.

"George is to be confirmed at Easter," said the Porter's wife. So far advanced now was George.

"It wouldn't be amiss either to have him 'prenticed," said the father, "to something tidy, of course; and so we shall get him out in the world."

"He would come home, though, to sleep at nights," said the mother. "It wouldn't be easy to find a master with a spare room. Clothes, too, we should have to give him: the bit of food he now eats is easily come at, he can make himself happy with a couple of baked potatoes; and he has his teaching free. Just let him go his own way, and he'll turn out a blessing to us, you may be sure! Didn't the Professor say so?"

The confirmation clothes were ready. Mother herself did the sewing, but they had been cut out by the jobber, and he knew how to cut them: if he'd only been better placed, and could have opened a shop and taken 'prentices, said the Porter's wife, the man might have become court tailor.

The clothes were ready, and the candidate was ready. On the confirmation day George received a great imitation-gold watch from his godfather, the flax dealer's old shopman, the richest of George's godfathers. The watch was old and well tried: it always went too fast, but that is better than going too slow. This was a splendid present; and from the General's came a hymnbook bound in morocco, sent by the little lady to whom George had presented his pictures. On the flyleaf stood his name and her name, and "his gracious well wisher." This was written after the dictation of the General's lady, and the General had read it through, and said, "*Charmant!*"

"That was really a great attention from such grand gentlefolk," said the Porter's wife; and George had to go upstairs in his confirmation clothes, and with his hymnbook, to show himself and return thanks.

Her ladyship sat in a number of wrappings, and she had one of her bad headaches, which always came when she felt *ennui*. She looked kindly at George, and wished him everything that was good, and none

of her headache. The General was in his dressing gown, and wore a tasseled cap, and boots with tops of red russia. He paced up and down the floor three times, in thoughts and remembrances of his own, stopped still, and said—

"Little George, then, is now a Christian man! Let him be likewise an honest man, and pay due respect to his superiors! This sentence, some day, when you are old, you can say that the General taught you."

This was a longer speech than the General was accustomed to make; and he fell back, into meditation, and looked imposing. But of all that George heard or saw up there, nothing remained fixed in his memory so clearly as little Miss Emily. How winning she looked, how soft, how fluttering, how fragile! If her portrait was to be painted, it must be in a soap bubble. There was a fragrance about her clothes and her curly yellow hair as if she were a fresh-blossomed rose tree. And with her he had once shared bread and butter; and she had eaten it with a sharp appetite, and nodded to him at every mouthful. Could she possibly recollect it still? Surely yes; it was "in remembrance" of this that she had given him the handsome hymnbook. And so, next year, as soon as the New Year's new moon was shining, he went out of doors with a loaf and a shilling in his hand, and opened the book to see what hymn he should turn up. It was a hymn of praise and thanksgiving. And he opened it again to see what would turn up for little Emily. He was mightily careful not to dip into one part of the book—the place of the funeral hymns; and yet, for all his care, he *did* dip in between death and the grave. This was not the sort of thing to believe in; not a bit of it! and yet frightened he was, when soon afterwards the dainty little girl was laid up in bed, and when the hall door was visited daily by the doctor's carriage.

"They'll not keep her," said the Porter's wife; "our Lord knows right well whom He will take to himself."

But they did keep her, and George drew pictures to send her. He drew the castle of the Czár, the old Kremlin at Moscow, exactly as it stood, with turrets and cupolas: they looked like gigantic green and gilt cucumbers—at least, they looked so in George's drawing. It pleased little Emily so much, that in the course of the week George sent some more pictures, all of them buildings; for then she would have plenty to think about, wondering what was inside the door and the windows.

He drew a Chinese house, with bells hanging to all the sixteen stories. He drew two Greek temples, with slender marble pillars and steps round them. He drew a Norwegian church; one could see it was entirely built of timbers, deeply carved and quaintly set up; every story looked as if it had cradle rockers. But most beautiful of all was one design, a castle, which he called "Little Emily's." This was to be her dwelling place, and

so George had imagined it all himself, and picked out for it whatever seemed prettiest in each of the other buildings. It had carved beams, like the Norwegian church; marble pillars, like the Greek temples; a peal of bells on every story; and at the top of all, cupolas, green and gilded, like those upon the Kremlin of the Czar. It was a true child's palace! And under every window was written what the hall or chamber was intended for: "Here Emily sleeps": "Here Emily dances": and "Here she is to play at 'visitors coming.'" It was amusing to look at, and looked at it was, you may be sure.

"*Charmant!*" said the General.

But the old Count—for there was an old Count, who was even grander than the General, and had a castle and mansion of his own—said nothing. He had been told that this had been imagined and drawn by the Porter's little son. Not that the boy was so very little now; indeed, he was confirmed. The old Count looked at the pictures, and had his own quiet thoughts about them.

One morning, when the weather was downright gray, damp and dismal, it proved one of the brightest and best of days for little George. The Professor at the Art Academy called him into his private room.

"Listen, my lad," said he; "let us have a little talk together. Our Lord has favored you with good abilities; he is now favoring you with good friends. The old Count at the corner house has spoken to me about you. I have seen your pictures also; between ourselves, we may cross them out, they require so much correction. But henceforward you may come twice a week to my drawing school, and so learn in time to do better. I believe there is more stuff in you to make an architect than a painter. This you will have time to consider; but go up at once to the old Count at the corner house, and give thanks to our Lord for such a friend.

It was a fine mansion, that corner house: round the windows were carved figures, both elephants and dromedaries, all of the olden time; but the old Count was fondest of the modern time, and whatever good it brought, whether out of drawing room, or the cellar, or the garret.

"I do think," said the Porter's wife, "that the more folks are really grand, the less they are stuck up. You should see the old Count, ever so sweet and affable! and he can talk, bless you, just like you and me—you won't find that at the General's. There was George yesterday, clean upside down with delight, the Count treated him so graciously; and I am much the same today, after getting a talk with the great man. Wasn't it lucky now, that we didn't 'prentice George to a trade. The boy has good parts in him."

"But they must have help from outside," said the father.

"Well, and now he has got help," said the mother. "The Count spoke out, plain and straightforward, that he did."

"It was at the General's though, that it was all set going," said the father: "they must have their turn of thanks, too."

"They may have it, and welcome," said the mother; "yet there's not overmuch to thank them for, I reckon. I'll thank our Lord above all, and thank Him all the more, now that little Emily is coming round again."

Emily kept getting on, and George kept getting on; in the course of the year he won, first the small silver medal, and then the great one.

"It would have been better, after all, to have 'prenticed him!" said the Porter's wife, in tears; "we should have kept him here, then. What does he want in Rome? Never more shall I set eyes on him, even if he ever comes home again; and that he won't do, poor dear child!"

"But it's for his own good and glory," said the father.

"Ah! it's all very fine talking, husband," said the mother, "but you don't mean what you say. You are just as downhearted as I am."

And it was all true, both as to the grief and the going away. It was a grand piece of luck for the young man, said the neighbors.

And there was a round of leave-taking, including the General's. Her ladyship did not appear; she had her bad headache. The General at parting related his only anecdote—what he had said to the Prince, and how the Prince had said to him, "Monsieur, you are incomparable!" and then he gave George his hand—his slack old hand.

Emily, too, gave George her hand, and looked almost dismal; but there was no one so dismal as George.

Time goes on. Whether one is busy or idle. Time is equally long, though not equally profitable. To George it was profitable, and never seemed long, except when he thought of those at home: how were they getting on, upstairs and downstairs? Well, tidings were sent of them: and so much may be wrapped up in a letter—both the bright sunshine and the gloomy shade. The shade of death lay in the letter, that told him his mother was left a lonesome widow. Emily had been an angel of comfort: "she had come down below, she had," wrote mother. As for herself, she added, she had got leave to take father's post at the Porter's lodge.

The General's lady kept a diary: every ball was entered in it, every party she had been to, and every visit she had received. The volume was illustrated with cards of diplomatists, and other grandees. She was proud of her diary; it increased in growth, season after season, during many great headaches, but also during many bright nights—that is to say, court balls.

Emily had now been to her first court ball. The mother was in pink, with black lace—Spanish; the daughter was in white, so clear, so fine! green ribbons fluttered, like bulrush-leaves, in her curly yellow locks, and she was crowned with a wreath of white water lilies. With her sparkling blue eyes, and soft, rosy lips, she resembled a little mermaid, as beautiful as one could imagine. Three princes danced with her, one after another. Her ladyship had no headache for a whole week.

But the first ball was not the last. It was getting too much for Emily; and so it was well that summer came, with rest and change of air. The family was invited to the castle of the old Count.

This castle had a garden worth seeing. One part of it was quite in the old style, with stiff, green alleys, where one seemed to be walking between tall green screens, pierced with peeping holes; box trees and yew trees stood clipped into stars and pyramids; water sprang from great grottoes, set with cockle-shells; stone figures stood all round about, of the very heaviest stone, as one could plainly perceive by the faces and draperies; every flower bed had its own device—such as a fish, a heraldic shield, or a monogram: this was the French part of the garden. From this part one came out, as it were, into the fresh wildwood, where the trees could grow as they pleased, and were therefore great and splendid. There was a green turf, inviting one's feet to tread on it, well mown, well rolled, and well kept altogether. This was the English part of the garden.

"Olden times and modern times!" said the Count: "here they meet with loving embraces. In about two years the house itself will assume its proper importance. It will undergo a perfect change into something handsomer and better. I will show you the plans, and I will show you the architect; he is coming here to dinner."

"*Charmant!*" said the general.

"This garden is paradisiacal!" said her ladyship; "and yonder you have a baronial castle."

"That is my hen house," said the Count; "the pigeons live in the tower, the turkeys on the first floor, but in the parlor reigns old Dame Else. She has spare rooms on all sides; this for the sitting hen, that for the hen and chickens, while the ducks have their own outlet to the water."

"*Charmant!*" repeated the General, and they all went to see the fine show.

Old Else stood in the middle of the parlor, and beside her stood the architect—George! He and little Emily met—after so many years—met in the hen house.

Aye, there he stood a comely figure to look at: his countenance open and determined, his hair black and glossy, and his mouth with a smile that said, "There is a little rogue behind my ear, that knows you outside

and inside!" Old Else had taken off her wooden shoes and stood in her stockings, out of respect for her illustrious visitors. The hens clucked, the cock crowed, and the ducks waddled along, rap, rap. But the pale slender girl, the friend of his childhood, the General's daughter, stood before him; her pale cheeks flushing with the rose, her eyes opening eagerly, and her mouth speaking without uttering a syllable. Such was the greeting he received; the prettiest that any young man could desire from a young lady; unless, indeed, they were of the same family, or had often danced together; but these two had never danced together.

The Count grasped his hand and presented him, saying, "Not a complete stranger, our young friend, Mr. George."

Her ladyship curtsied; her daughter was about to give him her hand, but she did not give it him.

"Our little Mr. George!" said the General. "Old house-friends: *charmant!*"

"You have grown quite an Italian," said her ladyship; "and you speak the language, no doubt, like a native."

Her ladyship could sing Italian, but not speak it, added the General.

At the dinner table George sat at the right hand of Emily. The General had led her in; and the Count had led in her ladyship.

George talked, and told anecdotes, and he could tell them well. He was the life and soul of the party; though the old Count could have been so too, if it had suited him. Emily sat silent; her ears listened, her eyes shone, but she said nothing.

They stood, she and George, among the flowers in the veranda behind a screen of roses. It was left to George again to begin speaking.

"Thanks for your kindness to my mother," said he; "I know that, on the night of my father's death, you went down and stayed with her, till his eyes were closed. Thanks!" He raised Emily's hand, and kissed it; he might fairly do so on that occasion. She grew blushing red; but pressed his hand in return, and looked at him with her tender blue eyes.

"Your mother was a loving soul; how fond she was of you! All your letters she brought me to read, so I seem almost to know you. I remember too when I was little, how kind you were to me. You gave me pictures"—

"Which you tore in-pieces," said George.

"Nay, I have still my own castle left—that drawing of it."

"And now I must build it in reality!" said George, and grew quite hot himself as he said it.

The General and his lady, in their own rooms, talked about the Porter's son. Why, he could express himself with knowledge, with refinement! "He is fit to be engaged as a tutor," said the General.

"Genius!" said her ladyship; and that was all she said.

Again and again, in those fine summer days, did George come to the castle of the Count. He was missed when he did not come.

"How much more God has given to you than to us ordinary mortals!" said Emily to him. "Are you grateful for that now?"

It flattered George, that this fair young girl should look up to him, and he thought she had rare powers of appreciation.

And the General felt more and more convinced that Mr. George could hardly be a genuine child of the cellar. "Otherwise, the mother was a right honest woman," said he; "that sentence I owe to her epitaph!"

Summer went; winter came; and there was more to tell about Mr. George. He had received notice and favor in the highest of high places. The General had met him at the court ball.

And now there was to be a ball at home, for little Emily. Could Mr. George be invited?

"Whom the King invites, the General can invite!" said the General, and drew himself up a good inch higher.

Mr. George was invited, and he came. And princes and counts came, and each danced better than the other. But Emily danced only the first dance, for in the course of it she sprained her ankle, not dangerously, but enough to give her pain; and so she had to be prudent, and stop dancing, and look on at the others. And there she sat, looking on, while the architect stood by her side.

"You are giving her the whole of St. Peter's at Rome," said the General, as he passed, smiling like benevolence itself.

With the same smile of benevolence he received Mr. George a few days afterward. The young man came to thank him for the ball, of course. Was there anything else to say? Yes, indeed, astounding—amazing—raving madness, that was all! The General could scarcely believe his own ears. A "pyramidal declamation!" an unheard-of proposition! Mr. George asked for little Emily as his wife!

"Man!" said the General, and he began to boil, "I cannot understand you! What is it you say? What is it you want? I don't know you. Sir! Fellow! you choose to come and break into my house! am I to stay here, or am I not?" And he backed out into his bedroom, and locked the door. George stood alone for a few moments, and then turned on his heel. In the corridor he met Emily.

"My father answered?"—she asked, with a trembling voice.

George pressed her hand. "He ran away from me—a better time will come."

There were tears in Emily's eyes: in those of the young man were courage and confidence; and the sun shone in upon them both and blessed them.

In his bedroom sat the General, boiling more and more; boiling over, and sputtering out "Lunacy! Porter-madness!"

Before an hour was past, the General's lady learned it all from the General's own mouth, and she called for Emily, and sat alone with her.

"Poor girl," she said; "to think of his insulting you so, insulting us all! You have tears in your eyes, I see: they are quite becoming to you. You look charming in tears. You remind me of myself on my wedding day. Go on crying, little Emily."

"That I must, indeed!" said Emily, "unless you and papa say 'Yes!'"

"Child," cried her ladyship, "you are ill! you are delirious! and I am getting my dreadful headache! O, the miseries that are coming down upon our house! Do not let your mother die, Emily; then you will have no mother."

And her ladyship's eyes were wet: she could not bear to think of her own death.

Among other announcements in the *Gazette* might be seen: "Mr. George, appointed Professor, 5th class, No. 8."

"What a pity his father and mother are in the grave, and can't read it!" said the new porter folks, who now lived in the cellar under the General. They knew that the Professor had been born and bred within the four walls.

"Now he'll come in for the title tax!" said the man.

"Well, it's no such mighty matter for a poor child!" said the wife.

"Eighteen rix-dollars a year!" said the man. "I call it a good round sum."

"No, no; it's the title I'm talking of!" said the wife. "You don't suppose he'll be bothered by having the tax to pay? He can earn as much over and over again, and a rich wife into the bargain. If we had little ones, husband, a child of ours, too, would some day be architect and professor."

Thus George was well mentioned in the cellar, and he was well mentioned on the drawing-room floor: the old Count took good care of that.

It was the old set of childish picture drawings that introduced his name. But how came these to be mentioned? Why, the talk turned upon Russia, upon Moscow: and thus one was led right up to the Kremlin, of which our friend George made a drawing once, when he was little, for the little Miss Emily. What a number of pictures he used to draw! one the Count especially remembered—"Little Emily's Castle," with scrolls showing where she slept, where she danced, and where she played at "Visitors coming." The Professor had great ability. He might live to be an old veteran privy counselor—that was not at all improbable: aye, and build a real castle for the young lady before he died—why not?

"That was a strange burst of vivacity," remarked the General's lady, when the Count was gone. The General nodded his head, thoughtfully, and went out riding, with his groom at a respectful distance behind him, and he sat prouder than ever on his high horse.

Little Emily's birthday came, bringing cards and notes, books and flowers. The General kissed her on the brow, and her ladyship kissed her on the lips. They were patterns of parental affection; and they were all three honored with high visitors—two of the princes. Then there was talk about balls and theatres, about diplomatic embassies, and the government of kingdoms and empires. There was talk about rising men, about native talent; and this brought up the name of the young professor, Mr. George, the architect.

"He is building for immortality!" it was said; "meanwhile he is building himself into one of the first families."

"One of the first families!" repeated the General, when he was left alone with her ladyship: "which one of our first families?"

"I can guess which was alluded to," said her ladyship; "but I don't choose to speak, nor even think of it. God may ordain it so, but I shall be quite astounded!"

"Astounded!" echoed the General. "Look at me; I haven't a single idea in my head!" and he sank into a reverie, waiting for thoughts to come.

There is an unspeakable power bestowed on a man by a few dew-drops of grace—grace from above—whether the grace of kings, or the grace of God; and both of these combined in favor of little George.

But we are forgetting the birthday.

Emily's chamber was fragrant with flowers, sent by her friends and playmates: on her table lay fine presents, tokens of greeting and remembrance; but not one from George. Gifts from him would not have reached her, but they were not needed; the whole house was a remembrance of him. From the very sand bin under the stairs peeped a memorial flower, even as Emily had peeped, when the curtain was in flames, and George rushed up as first fireman. One glance out of the window, and the acacia tree reminded her of the days of childhood. Blossoms and leaves were gone, but the tree stood in hoar-frost, like a vast branch of coral; and full and clear between the branches shone the moon, unchanged though ever changing, the same as when boy George shared his bread and butter with baby Emily.

She opened a drawer and took out the pictures—the Kremlin of the Czar, and her own castle—keepsakes from George. They were looked on and mused upon, and thought after thought kept rising. She remembered the day when, unmarked by father or mother, she stole down to where the Porter's wife lay breathing her last; she sat by her side,

held her hand, and heard her dying words, "Blessing—George!" The mother was thinking of her son. But now, to Emily, the words seemed to bear a deeper meaning. In good truth, George was with her on her birthday.

The next day, as it happened, was another birthday, the General's own, for he had been born the day after his daughter—naturally earlier, many years earlier. Again there came presents; and among the rest a saddle of a peculiar make, and comfortable and costly; there was only one of the princes who had the fellow to it. From whom could it have come? The General was in ecstasy. It bore a little ticket. Now, if this had said, "Thanks for yesterday," any of us could have guessed whom it came from, but the ticket said, "From one whom the General does not know."

"Who in the world is there I do not know?" said the General. "I know everybody," and his thoughts went paying visits in the great world. He knew them all there, one and all. "It comes from my wife!" he said, at last. "She is making fun of me! *Charmant!*"

But she was not making fun of him; that time was gone by.

Once more there was a feast; but not at the General's. It was a fancy ball given by one of the princes: masking was allowed there.

The General went as Rubens, in a Spanish dress with a small ruff, upright as his rapier. Her ladyship was Madame Rubens, in black velvet, a high bodice, terribly warm, and her neck in a millstone, that is to say, in a large ruff. She looked the image of a Dutch painting of the General's, the hands in which were especially admired, and were thought exactly like those of her ladyship.

Emily was Psyche, in muslin and lace. She was a floating tuft of swan's-down; she was in no need of wings, and only wore them as the Psyche badge.

It was a scene of pomp and splendor, lights and flowers, magnificence and taste. One had hardly time to pay attention to Madame Rubens and her beautiful hands.

A black Domino, with an acacia flower in his hood, danced with Psyche.

"Who is he?" asked the General's lady.

"His Royal Highness," said the General. "I am quite sure of that. I knew him at once by his hand-salute."

Her ladyship doubted.

General Rubens did not doubt. He drew near the black Domino, and wrote royal initials on the palm of his hand. They were not acknowledged; but a certain hint was given in return: the motto of the saddle!—"One whom the General does not know!"

"Yet something I do know of you," said the General; "it was you who sent me the saddle."

The Domino waved his hand, and disappeared among the others.

"Who is the black Domino you have been dancing with, Emily?" asked her mother.

"I did not ask his name," she answered.

"Because you knew it! It is the Professor. Your protégé, Count, is there," she continued, turning to the Count, who stood close by; "the black Domino with the acacia flower."

"Very likely, your ladyship," he replied; "but still, there is one of the princes in the same costume."

"I know that hand-salute," said the General. "From the Prince I received the saddle! I feel so sure of my man, that I would ask him to dinner."

"Do so," said the Count; "if it's the Prince he will be sure to come."

"And if it is the other he will not come," said the General; and made his way to the black Domino, who stood talking with the King. The General offered him a most respectful invitation, together with hopes of better acquaintance. The General smiled in full confidence, he knew so well whom he was inviting, and he spoke aloud and distinctly.

The Domino lifted his mask; it was George!

"Does the General repeat his invitation?" he asked.

The General drew himself an inch higher, assumed a stiffer bearing, took two steps backward, and one step forward, as if dancing a minuet; and all the gravity and expression he could muster—*all the General*, in short—stood in his fine features.

"I never retract my offers—the Professor is invited!" and he bowed, with a sidelong glance at the King, who might certainly have heard the whole of it.

And thus the General gave a dinner, at which his only guests were the old Count and his protégé.

"My foot under the table!" thought George; "the foundation stone is laid." And so it was indeed; and it was laid with great solemnity on the part of the General and her ladyship.

The man had come and gone; and, as the General was quite ready to confess, had behaved like a member of good society, and had been vastly agreeable; the General had often found himself repeating his "*Charmant*." Her ladyship also talked of her dinner; talked of it to one of the highest and most highly gifted of the court ladies, and the latter begged an invitation for herself, next time the Professor came. So he must needs be reinvited. And invited he was, and came, and again he was "*Charmant*"; he could even play at chess!

"He is not from the cellar," said the General. "Most undoubtedly he is some scion of nobility—there are many such noble scions—and that is not any fault of the young man's!"

Mr. Professor could enter the King's house, and so might very well enter the General's; but strike root there—no! Who could talk of such at thing?—Why, the whole town, that was all.

He did strike root, and he grew. The dew of grace fell from above.

There was nobody, therefore, astonished that, when the Professor became State Counselor, Emily became *State Counseloress*. "Life is tragedy or comedy," said the General: "in tragedy they die; in comedy they win each other."

Here they won each other. And they won three sturdy boys, though not all at once.

The sweet children rode on sticks from room to room, whenever they came to see grandfather and grandmother. And the General rode on a stick behind them, "as groom for the small State Counselors!"

Her ladyship sat on the sofa and smiled, even if she had got her bad headache.

So far did George get on in the world, and much farther too; or else it would not have been worth my while to tell the story of "The Porter's Son."

THE SHEPHERDESS AND THE CHIMNEY SWEEP

HAVE YOU ever seen a very, very old clothespress, quite black with age, on which all sorts of flowers and leaves were carved? Just such a one stood in a certain room. It was a legacy from a grandmother, and it was carved from top to bottom with roses and tulips; the most curious flourishes were to be seen on it, and between them little stags popped out their heads with zigzag antlers. But on the top a whole man was carved. True, he was funny to look at; for he showed his teeth—laughing one could not call it—had goat's legs, little horns on his head, and a long beard. The children in the room always called him General-clothespress-inspector-head-superintendent Goatslegs, for this was a name difficult to pronounce, and there are very few who get the title; but to cut him out in wood—that was no trifle. However, there he was. He looked down upon the table and toward the mirror, for there a charming little porcelain Shepherdess was standing. Her shoes were gilded, her gown was tastefully looped up with a red rose, and she had a golden hat and cloak; in short, she was most exquisite. Close by stood

a little Chimney Sweep, as black as a coal, but of porcelain too. He was just as clean and pretty as another; as to his being a sweep, that was only what he represented; and the porcelain manufacturer could just as well have made a prince of him as a chimney sweep, if he had chosen; one was as easy as the other.

There he stood so prettily with his ladder, and with a little round face as fair and as rosy as that of the Shepherdess. In reality this was a fault; for a little black he certainly ought to have been. He was quite close to the Shepherdess; both stood where they had been placed; and as soon as they were put there, they had mutually promised each other eternal fidelity; for they suited each other exactly—they were young, they were of the same porcelain, and both equally fragile.

Close to them stood another figure three times as large as they were. It was an old Chinese, that could nod his head. He was of porcelain too, and said that he was grandfather of the little Shepherdess; but this he could not prove. He asserted, moreover, that he had authority over her, and that was the reason he had nodded his assent to the General-clothespress-inspector-head-superintendent Goatslegs, who paid his addresses to the Shepherdess.

"In him," said the old Chinese, "you will have a husband who, I verily believe, is of mahogany. You will be Mrs. Goatslegs, the wife of a General-clothespress-inspector-head-superintendent, who has his shelves full of plate, besides what is hidden in secret drawers and recesses."

"I will not go into the dark cupboard," said the little Shepherdess; "I have heard say that he has eleven wives of porcelain in there already."

"Then you may be the twelfth," said the Chinese. "Tonight, as soon as the old clothespress cracks, as sure as I am a Chinese, we will keep the wedding." And then he nodded his head, and fell asleep.

But the little Shepherdess wept, and looked at her beloved—at the porcelain Chimney Sweep.

"I implore you," said she, "fly hence with me; for here it is impossible for us to remain."

"I will do all you ask," said the little Chimney Sweep. "Let us leave this place. I think my trade will enable me to support you."

"If we were only down from the table," said she. "I shall not be happy till we are far from here, and free."

He consoled her, and showed her how she was to set her little foot on the carved border and on the gilded foliage which twined around the leg of the table, brought his ladder to her assistance, and at last both were on the floor; but when they looked toward the old clothespress, they observed a great stir. All the carved stags stretched their

heads out farther, raised their antlers, and turned round their heads. The General-clothespress-inspector-head-superintendent gave a jump, and called to the old Chinese, "They are eloping! they are eloping!"

At this she grew a little frightened, and jumped quickly over the tidge into the drawer.

Here lay three or four packs of cards, which were not complete, and a little puppet show, which was set up as well as it was possible to do. A play was being performed, and all the ladies, Diamonds as well as Hearts, Clubs, and Spades, sat in the front row, and fanned themselves with the tulips they held in their hands, while behind them stood the varlets. The play was about two persons who could not have each other, at which the Shepherdess wept, for it was her own history.

"I cannot bear it longer," said she; "I must get out of the drawer."

But when she had got down on the floor, and looked up to the table, she saw that the old Chinese was awake, and that his whole body was rocking.

"The old Chinese is coming!" cried the little Shepherdess; and down she fell on her porcelain knee, so frightened was she.

"A thought has struck me," said the Chimney Sweep; "let us creep into the great Potpourri Jar that stands in the corner; there we can lie on roses and lavender, and if he comes after us, throw dust in his eyes."

"'Tis of no use," said she. "Besides, I know that the old Chinese and the Potpourri Jar were once betrothed; and when one has been once on such terms, a little regard always lingers behind. No; for us there is nothing left but to wander forth into the wide world."

"Have you really courage to go forth with me into the wide world?" asked the Chimney Sweep tenderly. "Have you considered how large it is, and that we can never come back here again?"

"I have," said she.

And the Sweep gazed fixedly upon her, and then said, "My way lies up the chimney. Have you really courage to go with me through the stove, and to creep through all the flues? We shall then get into the main flue, after which I am not at a loss what to do. Up we mount, then, so high, that they can never reach us; and at the top is an opening that leads out into the world."

And he led her toward the door of the stove.

"It looks quite black," said she; but still she went with him, and on through all the intricacies of the interior, and through the flues, where a pitchy darkness reigned.

"We are now in the chimney," said she; "and behold, behold, above us is shining the loveliest star!"

It was a real star in the sky that shone straight down upon them, as if to show them the way. They climbed and they crept higher and

higher. It was a frightful way; but he lifted her up, he held her, and showed her the best places on which to put her little porcelain feet; and thus they reached the top of the chimney, and seated themselves on the edge of it; for they were tired, which is not to be wondered at.

The heaven and all its stars were above them, and all the roofs of the town below them; they could see far around, far away into the world. The poor Shepherdess had never pictured it to herself thus; she leaned her little head on her Sweep, and wept so bitterly that all the gilding of her girdle came off.

"O, this is too much!" said she; "I cannot bear it. The world is too large. O, were I but again on the little table under the looking glass! I shall never be happy till I am there again. I have followed you into the wide world; now, if you really love me, you may follow me home again."

And the Chimney Sweep spoke sensibly to her, spoke to her about the old Chinese and the General-clothespress-inspector-head-superintendent; but she sobbed so violently, and kissed her little Sweep so passionately, that he was obliged to give way, although it was not right to do so.

So now down they climbed again with great difficulty, crept through the flue, and into the stove, where they listened behind the door, to discover if anybody was in the room. It was quite still; they peeped, and there, on the floor, in the middle of the room, lay the old Chinese. He had fallen from the table in trying to follow the fugitives, and was broken in three pieces; his whole back was but a stump, and his head had rolled into a corner, while General-clothespress-inspector-head-superintendent Goatslegs was standing where he had ever stood, absorbed in thought.

"How dreadful!" said the little Shepherdess. "My old grandfather is dashed to pieces, and we are the cause. I never can survive the accident." And she wrung her little hands in agony.

"He can be mended," said the Chimney Sweep; "he can easily be mended. Only do not be so hasty. If we glue his back together, and rivet his neck well, he will be as good as new, and will be able to say enough disagreeable things to us yet."

"Do you think so?" said she; and then they clambered up again to the table on which they had stood before.

"You see," said the Sweep, "we might have spared ourselves these disagreeables, after all."

"If we had but mended my old grandfather!" said the Shepherdess. "Does it cost much?"

And mended he was. The family had his back glued, and his neck riveted, so that he was as good as new, except that he could not nod.

"It seems to me that you have grown haughty since you were dashed to pieces," said General-clothespress-inspector-head-superintendent Goatslegs. "However, I think there is not so very much to be proud of. Am I to have her, or am I not?"

The Chimney Sweep and the little Shepherdess looked so touchingly at the old Chinese; they feared he would nod, but he could not, and it was disagreeable to him to tell a stranger that he had constantly a rivet in his neck. So the little porcelain people remained together. They blessed the old grandfather's rivet, and loved each other till they fell to pieces.

AUNTY

YOU SHOULD have known Aunty. She was so charming. Yes; that is to say, not at all charming in the usual sense of charming, but sweet and quaint, and funny in her own way; just the thing, in short, to chat about, when one feels in the mood for gossiping and laughing. She was fit to be put in a play; and that simply and solely because she herself lived for the theatre, and all that goes on in it. She was far above any scandal; and even Commercial Agent Bigg (or Pig, as Aunty called him) could only say she was stage struck.

"The theatre is my schoolroom," said she; "my fountain of knowledge. There I have rubbed up my old Bible history; take 'Moses,' for instance, or 'Joseph and his Brethren'; they are operas now. It is there that I have studied my General History, my Geography, and foreign Manners and Customs. From French pieces I have learned Paris life—rather naughty, but highly interesting. How I have cried over the 'Riguebourg Family'; to think that the husband must drink himself to death, and all to let his wife get her young sweetheart. Aye, many and many's the tear I've shed, all those fifty years of playgoing."

Aunty knew every piece, every bit of scenery, every actor that came on, or ever had come on. She could hardly be said to live, except in the nine theatrical months. A summer without a summer spectacle was enough to age her; while a play night that lasted till morning was a prolongation of life. She did not say like other people, "We shall soon have spring: the stork is come!" or "There is news in the paper of the early strawberries!" No; the autumn was what she announced, thus: "Have you seen the box office is open; they'll soon begin the performances."

She reckoned the worth of a house and its situation by its distance

from the theatre. It was grief to her to leave the narrow court behind the theatre, and flit to the wide street a little further off, and live there without any opposite neighbors.

"At home my windows should be my theatre box. One can't sit there in the dumps, never seeing a soul. But where I live now I seem to be clean out in the country; not a living creature in sight unless I go into the back kitchen, and clamber up on the sink; that's the only way of getting at my neighbors. Now, in that old court of mine, I could look right into the flax dealer's; and then I had only three hundred steps to take to the theatre; now it takes me three thousand steps, and trooper's steps too."

Aunty might sometimes be out of sorts; but, well or ill, she never neglected the theatre. Her doctor ordered her, one evening, to put her feet in poultices; she did as he told her; but rode off to the theatre, and sat there with her feet in poultices. If she had died there, she would have been contented. Thorwaldsen died in the theatre; this she called "a blessed death."

She could not form any notion of heaven if there was to be no theatre there. It was not exactly promised us: but only think of all the great actors and actresses who had gone before; surely they must find some fresh scene of action.

Aunty had her own electric wire from the theatre to her room; the telegram came every Sunday to coffee. Her electric wire was "Mr. Sivertsen of the stage machinery department." It was he who gave the signals for up or down, on or off, with the curtain and scenery.

From him she received a brief and businesslike report of the coming pieces. Shakespeare's *Tempest* he called "wretched stuff! there is so much to set up! why, it begins with water to back-scene No. 1." That was to say, that so far backward stretched the rolling billows. On the other hand, if a piece could get through five acts without a single change of decorations, he pronounced it sensible and well constructed; a steady-going piece that could play itself, without any pushing or pulling.

Aunty used to talk about "a goodish time back," meaning some thirty and odd years, when she and Mr. Sivertsen were both younger; how he was then already in the machinery department, and how he became her "benefactor." In those days it was the custom, at the great and only theatre of the town, to admit spectators into the cockloft; every carpenter could dispose of one or two places. It was soon chock-full; and the company was very select; the wives of generals and admiralmen had been there, it was said; it was so interesting to look down behind the scenes, and observe how the performers stood and moved, when the curtain was down.

Aunty had many times been there; especially to tragedies and ballets: for the pieces that required the largest *personale* were the most interesting to see from the cockloft. One sat up there in darkness pretty nearly. Most people brought their suppers with them. Once three apples, a slice of bread and butter, and a sausage roll came straight down into the prison where *Ugolino* and his sons were just about to die of hunger. This sausage roll produced a great effect. It was cheered by the public; but it determined the managing committee to shut up the cockloft.

"But still, I have been there seven-and-thirty times," said Aunty; "and that I shall always remember of Mr. Sivertsen."

On the very last evening that the cockloft was open to the public, the *Judgment of Solomon* was played; Aunty could remember it so well. From her benefactor, Mr. Sivertsen, she had obtained a ticket for Agent Bigg. Not that he deserved one; he was always flouting and fleering at the theatre, and quizzing her about it; still she did get him a place in the cockloft. He wanted to look at the playhouse articles wrong side uppermost: "these were his very words, and just like him," said Aunty.

So he saw the *Judgment of Solomon* from above, and fell asleep. It was easy to guess that he had been dining out and joining in several toasts. He slept till he was locked in, and sat the whole dark night in the theatre loft. He had a story to tell of his waking up; but Aunty did not believe a bit of it. The play was played out, the lamps and lights were all out, all the people were out, above and beneath; but then began the after-piece, the genuine comedy, the best of all, said the agent. There came life into the properties; it was not *Solomon's Judgment* that was given now, but *Judgment Day at the Theatre*. And all this did Agent Bigg, in his impudence, try to cram into Aunty; that was her thanks for getting him into the cockloft.

What the agent went on to tell might be comical enough, but there was mockery and spite at the bottom of it.

"It was dark up there," said the agent; "but then began the demon-show, the grand spectacle, *Judgment Day at the Theatre*. Check takers stood at the doors, and every spectator had to show his spiritual testimonial, to settle whether he was to enter freehanded or handcuffed, and with or without a gag in his mouth. Fine gentlefolk, who came too late, when the performance had already begun, and young fellows given to losing their time, were tethered outside. There they were shod with felt, so as to creep in gently before the next act, besides being gagged. And so began *Judgment Day at the Theatre*."

"Mere spite," said Aunty; "which our Lord knows nothing of."

The scene painter, if he wished to get into heaven, had to clamber up some stairs which he had painted himself, but which were too high for the longest pair of legs. That, to be sure, was only a sin against perspective. All the trees, flowers, and buildings, which the machinist had taken such pains to plant in lands quite foreign to them, the poor wretch had to transplant into their proper homes, and all before cockcrow, if he looked for any chance of heaven. Mr. Bigg had better mind his own chances of getting there! And then to hear what he told of the performers, both in tragedy and comedy, in song and in dance—why, it was shameful of Mr. Bigg! Mr. *Pig* indeed! he never deserved his place in the cockloft. Aunty would not believe him on his oath. It was all written out, he said; and he swore (the pig!) it should be printed when he was dead and buried—not before, he had no wish to be flayed alive.

Aunty had once been in terror and anguish in her own temple of happiness, the theatre. It was a winter day; one of those days when we have just two hours of foggy daylight. It was bleak and snowy; but Aunty was bound for the theatre. They were to give *Herman von Unna* besides a little opera and a great ballet, a prologue and an epilogue: it would last over the night. Aunty must needs be off: her lodger had lent her a pair of winter boots, shaggy both outside and inside; they reached the whole way up the legs.

She came to the theatre and into her box; the boots were warm, so she kept them on. Suddenly there arose a cry of "Fire!" smoke came from one of the wings, smoke came from the cockloft; there was a frightful uproar. People stormed out. Aunty sat furthest from the door. "Second tier, left-hand side; the decorations tell best there," she used to say; "they are always arranged to look prettiest from the king's side of the house." Aunty now wished to get out of it, but those before her, in their blundering excitement, slammed the door fast. There stood Aunty; there was no way out, and no way in, for the next box had too high a partition. She called; nobody heard her. She looked over at the tier underneath; it was empty; the balustrade was low; there was not far to drop. In her fright she felt young and active. She prepared for a jump. She got one foot on the bench, the other over the balustrade; and there she sat astride, well draped in her flowered skirt, with a long leg dangling below it, displaying an enormous boot. That was a sight to see! Seen it was, and Aunty heard at last; and she was easily saved, for there was no fire to speak of.

That was the most memorable evening in her life, she used to say; and she thanked Heaven she did not see herself, or she would have died of shame.

Her benefactor in the machinery department, Mr. Sivertsen, came

to her regularly every Sunday. But it was a long time from Sunday to Sunday. Latterly, therefore, in the middle of the week, a small child came up for "the leavings"; that is to say, to make a supper off the remains of Aunty's dinner.

This child was a young member of the ballet, only too happy to get a meal. She used to tread the boards as a page or a fairy. Her hardest part was that of hindlegs for the lion in Mozart's *Magic Flute*. She grew up in time to be forelegs; for this she was only paid three marks, though she had been paid a rix-dollar when she was hindlegs; but then she had had to creep about stooping, and panting for want of fresh air. This was very interesting to know, observed Aunty.

If every one got his deserts, Aunty would have lasted as long as the theatre. But she could not hold out so long. Neither did she die in it, but quietly and decently in her own bed. Meanwhile her dying words were full of meaning; she asked, "What are they going to play tomorrow?"

She left behind her about five hundred rix-dollars—so at least we conclude from the yearly income, which amounts to twenty dollars. The money was left as a legacy to some one or other deserving old spinster, living alone in the world. It was to be used for taking a place on the second tier, left side, every Saturday; for on that day they gave the best pieces. Only one condition was imposed on the legatee. As she sat in the theater, every Saturday, she was to think of Aunty who lay in her grave.

This was Aunty's Religious Foundation.

THE DROP OF WATER

SURELY you know what a microscope is—that wonderful glass which makes everything appear a hundred times larger than it really is. If you look through a microscope at a single drop of ditch water, you will perceive more than a thousand strange-shaped creatures, such as you never could imagine dwelling in the water. It looks not unlike a plateful of shrimps, all jumping and crowding upon each other; and so ferocious are these little creatures, and they will tear off each other's arms and legs without mercy; and yet they are happy and merry after their fashion.

Now there was once an old man, whom all his neighbors called Cribbley Crabblev—a curious name to be sure! He always liked to make

the best of everything, and, when he could not manage it otherwise, he tried magic.

So one day he sat with his microscope held up to his eye, looking at a drop of ditch water. O, what a strange sight was that! All the thousand little imps in the water were jumping and springing about, and devouring each other, or pulling each other to pieces.

"Upon my word, this is too horrible!" cried old Cribbley Crabbley; "there must surely be some means of making them live in peace and quiet." And he thought and thought, but still could not hit on the right expedient. "I must give them a color," he said at last; "then I shall be able to see them more distinctly." And accordingly he let fall into the water a tiny drop of something that looked like red wine, but in reality it was witches' blood; whereupon all the strange little creatures immediately became red all over, not unlike the Red Indians; the drop of water now seemed a whole townful of naked wild men.

"What have you there?" inquired another old magician, who had no name at all, which made him more remarkable even than Cribbley Crabbley.

"Well, if you can guess what it is," replied Cribbley Crabbley, "I will give it you; but I warn you, you'll not find it out so easily."

And the magician without a name looked through the microscope. The scene now revealed to his eyes actually resembled a town where all the inhabitants were running about without clothing; it was a horrible sight! But still more horrible was it to see how they kicked and cuffed, struggled and fought, pulled and bit each other. All those that were lowest must needs strive to get uppermost, and all those that were highest must be thrust down. "Look, look!" they seemed to be crying out, "his leg is longer than mine; pah! off with it! And there is one who has a little lump behind his ear—an innocent little lump enough, but it pains him, and it shall pain him more!" And they hacked at it, and seized hold of him, and devoured him, merely because of this little lump. Only one of the creatures was quiet, very quiet, and still; it sat by itself, like a little modest girl, wishing for nothing but peace and rest. But the others would not have it so; they pulled the little girl forward, cuffed her, cut at her, and ate her.

"This is most uncommonly amusing," remarked the nameless magician.

"Do you think so? Well, but what is it?" asked Cribbley Crabbley. "Can you guess, or can you not? That's the question."

"To be sure I can guess," was the reply of the nameless magician, "easy enough. It is either Copenhagen or some other large city; I don't know which, for they are all alike. It is some large city."

"It is a drop of ditch water!" said Cribbley Crabbley.

THE ROSE ELF

IN THE midst of the garden grew a rosebush, which was quite covered with roses; and in one of them, the most beautiful of all, there dwelt an elf. He was so tiny that no human eye could see him. Behind every leaf in the rose he had a bedroom. He was as well formed and beautiful as any child could be, and had wings that reached from his shoulders to his feet. O, what a fragrance there was in his rooms! and how clear and bright were the walls! They were made of the pale pink rose leaves.

The whole day he rejoiced in the warm sunshine, flew from flower to flower, danced on the wings of the flying butterfly, and measured how many steps he would have to take to pass along all the roads and cross-roads that are marked out on a single hidden leaf. What we call veins on the leaf were to him highroads and crossroads. Yes, those were long roads for him! Before he had finished his journey the sun went down, for he had begun his work too late!

It became very cold, the dew fell, and the wind blew: now the best thing to be done was to come home. He made what haste he could, but the rose had shut itself up, and he could not get in; not a single rose stood open. The poor little elf was very much frightened. He had never been out at night before; he had always slumbered sweetly and comfortably behind the warm rose leaves. O, it certainly would be the death of him.

At the other end of the garden there was, he knew, an arbor of fine honeysuckle. The flowers looked like great painted horns, and he wished to go down into one of them to sleep till the next day.

He flew thither. Silence! two people were in there—a handsome young man and a young girl. They sat side by side, and wished that they need never part. They loved each other better than a good child loves its father and mother.

"Yet we must part!" said the young man. "Your brother does not like us, therefore he sends me away on an errand so far over mountains and seas. Farewell, my sweet bride, for that you shall be!"

And they kissed each other, and the young girl wept, and gave him a rose. But, before she gave it him, she impressed a kiss so firmly and closely upon it that the flower opened. Then the little elf flew into it, and leaned his head against the delicate fragrant walls. Here he could plainly hear them say "Farewell! farewell!" and he felt that the rose was placed on the young man's heart. O, how that heart beat! the little elf could not go to sleep, it thumped so.

But not long did the rose rest undisturbed on that breast. The man

took it out, and as he went lonely through the wood, he kissed the flower so often and so fervently that the little elf was almost crushed. He could feel through the leaf how the man's lips burned, and the rose itself had opened, as if under the hottest noonday sun.

Then came another man, gloomy and wicked; he was the bad brother of the pretty maiden. He drew out a sharp knife, and while the other kissed the rose the bad man stabbed him to death, and then, cutting off his head buried both head and body in the soft earth under the linden tree.

"Now he's forgotten and gone!" thought the wicked brother; "he will never come back again. He was to have taken a long journey over mountains and seas. One can easily lose one's life, and he has lost his. He cannot come back again, and my sister dare not ask news of him from me."

Then with his feet he shuffled dry leaves over the loose earth, and went home in the dark night. But he did not go alone, as he thought; the little elf accompanied him. The elf sat in a dry, rolled-up linden leaf that had fallen on the wicked man's hair as he dug. The hat was now placed over the leaf, and it was very dark in the hat, and the elf trembled with fear and with anger at the evil deed.

In the morning hour the bad man got home; he took off his hat, and went into his sister's bedroom. There lay the beautiful blooming girl, dreaming of him whom she loved from her heart, and of whom she now believed that he was going across the mountains and through the forests. And the wicked brother bent over her and laughed hideously, as only a fiend can laugh. Then the dry leaf fell out of his hair upon the coverlet; but he did not remark it, and he went out to sleep a little himself in the morning hour. But the elf slipped forth from the withered leaf, placed himself in the ear of the sleeping girl, and told her, as in a dream, the dreadful history of the murder; described to her the place where her brother had slain her lover and buried his corpse; told her of the blooming linden tree close by it, and said—

"That you may not think it is only a dream that I have told you, you will find on your bed a withered leaf."

And she found it when she awoke. O, what bitter tears she wept! The window stood open the whole day: the little elf could easily get out to the roses and all the other flowers, but he could not find it in his heart to quit the afflicted maiden. In the window stood a plant, a monthly rosebush: he seated himself in one of the flowers, and looked at the poor girl. Her brother often came into the room, and in spite of his wicked deed, he always seemed cheerful, but she dared not say a word of the grief that was in her heart.

As soon as the night came, she crept out of the house, went to the

wood, to the place where the linden tree stood, removed the leaves from the ground, turned up the earth, and immediately found him who had been slain. O, how she wept, and prayed that she might die also!

Gladly would she have taken the corpse home with her, but that she could not do. Then she took the pale head with the closed eyes, kissed the cold mouth, and shook the earth out of the beautiful hair. "That I will keep," she said. And when she had laid earth upon the dead body, she took the head, and a little sprig of the jasmine that bloomed in the wood where he was buried, home with her.

As soon as she came into her room, she brought the greatest flower-pot she could find: in this she laid the dead man's head, strewed earth upon it, and then planted the jasmine twig in the pot.

"Farewell! farewell!" whispered the little Elf: he could endure it no longer to see all this pain, and therefore flew out to his rose in the garden. But the rose was faded; only a few pale leaves clung to the wild bush.

"Alas! how soon everything good and beautiful passes away!" sighed the Elf.

At last he found another rose, and this became his house; behind its delicate fragrant leaves he could hide himself and dwell.

Every morning he flew to the window of the poor girl, and she was always standing weeping by the flowerpot. The bitter tears fell upon the jasmine spray, and every day, as the girl became paler and paler, the twig stood there fresher and greener, and one shoot after another sprouted forth, little white buds burst out, and these she kissed. But the bad brother scolded his sister, and asked if she had gone mad. He could not bear it, and could not imagine why she was always weeping over the flowerpot. He did not know what closed eyes were there, what red lips had there faded into earth. And she bowed her head upon the flowerpot, and the little Elf of the rose bush found her slumbering there. Then he seated himself in her ear, told her of the evening in the arbor, of the fragrance of the rose, and the love of the elves. And she dreamed a marvelously sweet dream, and while she dreamed her life passed away. She had died a quiet death, and she was in heaven, with him whom she loved.

And the jasmine opened its great white bells. They smelled quite peculiarly sweet; it could not weep in any other way over the dead one.

But the wicked brother looked at the beautiful blooming plant, and took it for himself as an inheritance, and put it in his bedroom, close by his bed, for it was glorious to look upon, and its fragrance was sweet and lovely. The little Rose Elf followed, and went from flower to flower—for in each dwelt a little soul—and told of the murdered young man,

whose head was now earth beneath the earth, and told of the evil brother and of the poor sister.

"We know it!" said each soul in the flowers; "we know it: have we not sprung from the eyes and lips of the murdered man? We know it! we know it!"

And then they nodded in a strange fashion with their heads.

The Rose Elf could not at all understand how they could be so quiet, and he flew out to the bees that were gathering honey, and told them the story of the wicked brother. And the bees told it to their Queen, and the Queen commanded that they should all kill the murderer next morning. But in the night—it was the first night that followed upon the sister's death—when the brother was sleeping in his bed, close to the fragrant jasmine, each flower opened, and invisible, but armed with poisonous spears, the flower-souls came out and seated themselves in his ear, and told him bad dreams, and then flew across his lips and pricked his tongue with the poisonous spears.

"Now we have avenged the dead man!" they said, and flew back into the jasmine's white bells.

When the morning came and the windows of the bedchamber were opened, the Rose Elf and the Queen Bee and the whole swarm of bees rushed in to kill him.

But he was dead already. People stood around his bed, and said, "The scent of the jasmine has killed him!" Then the Rose Elf understood the revenge of the flowers, and told it to the Queen and to the bees, and the Queen hummed with the whole swarm around the flower-pot. The bees were not to be driven away. Then a man carried away the flowerpot, and one of the bees stung him in the hand, so that he let the pot fall, and it broke in pieces.

Then they beheld the whitened skull, and knew that the dead man on the bed was a murderer.

And the Queen Bee hummed in the air, and sang of the revenge of the bees, and of the Rose Elf, and said that behind the smallest leaf there dwells ONE who can bring the evil to light, and repay it.

THE LEAPFROG

A FLEA, a grasshopper, and a leapfrog once wanted to see which could jump highest; and they invited the whole world, and everybody else besides who chose to come, to see the festival. Three famous

jumpers were they, as every one would say, when they all met together in the room.

"I will give my daughter to him who jumps highest," exclaimed the King; "for it is not so amusing where there is no prize to jump for."

The flea was the first to step forward. He had exquisite manners, and bowed to the company on all sides; for he had noble blood, and was, moreover, accustomed to the society of man alone; and that makes a great difference.

Then came the grasshopper. He was considerably heavier, but he was well-mannered, and wore a green uniform, which he had by right of birth; he said, moreover, that he belonged to a very ancient Egyptian family, and that in the house where he then was he was thought much of. The fact was, he had been just brought out of the fields, and put in a pasteboard house, three stories high, all made of court cards with the colored side inwards; and doors and windows cut out of the body of the Queen of Hearts. "I sing so well," said he, "that sixteen native grasshoppers who have chirped from infancy, and yet got no house built of cards to live in, grew thinner than they were before for sheer vexation when they heard me."

It was thus that the flea and the grasshopper gave an account of themselves, and thought they were quite good enough to marry a princess.

The leapfrog said nothing; but people gave it as their opinion that he therefore thought the more; and when the house dog snuffed at him with his nose, he confessed the leapfrog was of good family. The old councilor, who had had three orders given him to make him hold his tongue, asserted that the leapfrog was a prophet; for that one could see on his back if there would be a severe or mild winter, and that was what one could not see even on the back of the man who writes the almanac.

"I say nothing, it is true," exclaimed the King; "but I have my own opinion notwithstanding."

Now the trial was to take place. The flea jumped so high that nobody could see where he went to; so they all asserted he had not jumped at all; and that was dishonorable.

The grasshopper jumped only half as high; but he leaped into the King's face, who said that was ill-mannered.

The leapfrog stood still for a long time lost in thought; it was believed at last he would not jump at all.

"I only hope he is not unwell," said the house dog; when, pop! he made a jump all on one side into the lap of the Princess, who was sitting on a little golden stool close by.

Hereupon the King said, "There is nothing above my daughter;

therefore to bound up to her is the highest jump that can be made: but for this, one must possess understanding, and the leapfrog has shown that he *has* understanding. He is brave and intellectual."

And so he won the Princess.

"It's all the same to me," said the Flea; "she may have the old leapfrog, for all I care. I jumped the highest; but in this world merit seldom meets its reward. A fine exterior is what people look at nowadays."

The flea then went into foreign service, where, it is said, he was killed.

The grasshopper sat without on a green bank, and reflected on wordly things; and he said too, "Yes, a fine exterior is everything—a fine exterior is what people care about." And then he began chirping his peculiar melancholy song, from which we have taken this history; and which may, very possibly, be all untrue, although it does stand here printed in black and white.

THE BUTTERFLY

THE BUTTERFLY wanted a sweetheart, and of course he would choose a pretty little darling, one of the dear little flowers. He inspected them, saw each one sitting on her stalk, quiet and modest, as a maiden should be; but there were so many to choose among he was quite puzzled. So the Butterfly flew down to the Daisy. The French call her *Marguerite*; they know that she can tell fortunes; the way it is done is in this fashion: You pluck off the dainty little florets that form the petals one by one, asking a question about your sweetheart at each, "Does he love me from his heart?—or does he play a part?—loves he little?—loves he much?—loves he not at all?" This is the way it goes on. So the Butterfly came to ask to have his fortune told, but he would not bite off the leaves; he kissed every one in turn, thinking this would please the fortune teller.

"Sweet Miss Margaret Daisy," he began. "you are the wisest woman among all the flowers! You can tell fortunes! tell me, what shall I do? Shall I choose this one or that one? When you have told me which to woo, I can fly straight to her and begin."

But Marguerite answered him never a word. She did not approve of his calling her "a woman"; it sounded as if she were old and she was unmarried, and still young. He put his question a second time, he put it a third time, and as still he could not get a single word out of her, he gave up, and flew away to speed his wooing.

It was early spring; hyacinths and crocuses grew in abundance. "Really very charming!" pronounced the Butterfly. "Neat little school-girls! but somewhat prim." For, like most very young bachelors, he preferred older maidens. So he flew down to the anemones, but they were too shy. The violets were a little too dreamy, the tulips much too dashing, the lime blossoms too small and were too close and exclusive in their family life; the apple blossoms were, he must allow, like roses to look at, but then they opened one day, and, if the wind blew, fell to pieces the next; surely a union with one of them would be too brief. The Sweet Pea pleased him the most; she was red and white, dainty and piquant; she belonged to that class of comely domestic girls who are good-looking and yet useful in the kitchen. He was on the point of paying his addresses to her, when he noticed a pea pod hanging close by, a withered flower clinging to it. "Who is that?" he asked. "My sister," replied the Sweet Pea.

"Goodness! think of you ever coming to look like that!" The Butterfly was horrified, and flew away, warned in time.

Honeysuckles clung to the hedge; he looked full at these young ladies, with their long faces and yellow complexions. No, he did not like that kind of article at all. But what did he like?

Spring passed away, summer passed away, and autumn came: he was no nearer making up his mind. Flowers now wore handsome and gorgeous dresses, but where was the good? fresh, fragrant youth was past, and fragrance becomes so precious to the heart as one grows older, and no one can say that dahlias and hollyhocks have any particular perfume. So the Butterfly sought out the Balm Mint.

"It is not exactly a flower—it is rather all flower! it is fragrant from the root upward, with sweet scent in every leaf. Yes, I will take her!"

So, at last, he began his love-making.

But the Balm Mint stood stiff and silent, and at last replied, "Friendship, if you will, but nothing more! I am old, and you are old; we may very well live for each other, but marriage—no! let us not make fools of ourselves in our old age."

So the Butterfly got no sweetheart at all. He had looked about him too long, which is a mistake; he became an old bachelor.

It was late autumn, windy and wet; cold blew the blast down the backs of the poor shaky old willow trees. In such weather it is not pleasant to fly about in summer clothing, out of doors, getting one's self chilled through and through; but the Butterfly was spared that discomfort; he had chanced to fly into a room where there was a fire in the stove and the atmosphere was warm as summer. Here, he could exist; "but mere existence is not enough," he sighed; "to live, one must have sunshine, freedom, and a little flower!"

So he flew to the window pane, to take a last look at the flowers; there he was noticed, admired, captured, and set upon a needle to be stored in a museum of curiosities. More than this could not be done for him.

"Well, now I sit upon a stalk, like the flowers," quoth the Butterfly. "It is not exactly pleasant; it is very like being married, though one is kept so tight!" and he comforted himself with this reflection.

"A miserable consolation, truly!" said the flowers that lived in pots in the room.

"But one cannot quite trust the word of potted flowers," thought the Butterfly; "they have too much to do with men."

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

IT WAS terribly cold; it snowed and was already almost dark, and evening came on, the last evening of the year. In the cold and gloom a poor little girl, bareheaded and barefoot, was walking through the streets. When she left her own house she certainly had had slippers on; but of what use were they? They were very big slippers, and her mother had used them till then, so big were they. The little maid lost them as she slipped across the road, where two carriages were rattling by terribly fast. One slipper was not to be found again, and a boy had seized the other, and run away with it. He thought he could use it very well as a cradle, some day when he had children of his own. So now the little girl went with her little naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old apron she carried a number of matches, and a bundle of them in her hand. No one had bought anything of her all day, and no one had given her a farthing.

Shivering with cold and hunger she crept along, a picture of misery, poor little girl! The snowflakes covered her long fair hair, which fell in pretty curls over her neck; but she did not think of that now. In all the windows lights were shining, and there was a glorious smell of roast goose, for it was New Year's Eve. Yes, she thought of that!

In a corner formed by two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sat down, cowering. She had drawn up her little feet, but she was still colder, and she did not dare to go home, for she had sold no matches, and did not bring a farthing of money. From her father she would certainly receive a beating, and besides, it was cold at home, for they had nothing over them but a roof through which the wind whistled, though the largest rents had been stopped with straw and rags.

Her little hands were almost numb with the cold. Ah! a match might do her good, if she could only draw one from the bundle, and rub it against the wall, and warm her hands at it. She drew one out. R-r-atch! how it sputtered and burned! It was a warm bright flame, like a little candle, when she held her hands over it; it was a wonderful little light! It really seemed to the little girl as if she sat before a great polished stove, with bright brass feet and a brass cover. How the fire burned! how comfortable it was! but the little flame went out, the stove vanished, and she had only the remains of the burned match in her hand.

A second was rubbed against the wall. It burned up, and when the light fell upon the wall it became transparent like a thin veil, and she could see through it into the room. On the table a snow-white cloth was spread; upon it stood a shining dinner service; the roast goose smoked gloriously, stuffed with apples and dried plums. And what was still more splendid to behold, the goose hopped down from the dish, and waddled along the floor, with a knife and fork in its breast, to the little girl. Then the match went out, and only the thick, damp, cold wall was before her. She lighted another match. Then she was sitting under a beautiful Christmas tree; it was greater and more ornamented than the one she had seen through the glass door at the rich merchant's. Thousands of candles burned upon the green branches, and colored pictures like those in the print shops looked down upon them. The little girl stretched forth her hand toward them; then the match went out. The Christmas lights mounted higher. She saw them now as stars in the sky: one of them fell down, forming a long line of fire.

"Now some one is dying," thought the little girl, for her old grandmother, the only person who had loved her, and who was now dead, had told her that when a star fell down a soul mounted up to God.

She rubbed another match against the wall; it became bright again, and in the brightness the old grandmother stood clear and shining, mild and lovely.

"Grandmother!" cried the child. "O! take me with you! I know you will go when the match is burned out. You will vanish like the warm fire, the warm food, and the great, glorious Christmas tree!"

And she hastily rubbed the whole bundle of matches, for she wished to hold her grandmother fast. And the matches burned with such a glow that it became brighter than in the middle of the day; grandmother had never been so large or so beautiful. She took the little girl in her arms, and both flew in brightness and joy above the earth, very, very high, and up there was neither cold, nor hunger, nor care—they were with God.

But in the corner, leaning against the wall, sat the poor girl with red

cheeks and smiling mouth, frozen to death on the last evening of the Old Year. The New Year's sun rose upon a little corpse! The child sat there, stiff and cold, with the matches, of which one bundle was burned. "She wanted to warm herself," the people said. No one imagined what a beautiful thing she had seen, and in what glory she had gone in with her grandmother to the New Year's Day.

THE RAGS

AT THE DOOR of a paper mill stood heaps of dust and rubbish, piled up into stacks; they had been gathered far and wide, and every rag in them had a tale to tell, and told it too; but we cannot listen to them all. Some of the rags were native, others came from foreign lands. Here now was a Danish rag, lying close to a rag from Norway; rank Danish was the one, and rank Norse the other; and there was likely to be some fun between the two, as any experienced Dane or Norseman could tell you.

They understood each other well enough, though the two languages were as different--so the Norwegian said--as French and Hebrew. "We go to the hillside for ours, and get it fresh from the fountainhead, while the Dane cooks up a mawkish, wishy-washy sort of a lingo."

The rags talked, and rags are rags all the world over; they are thought nothing of except in the dust heap.

"I am Norse," said the Norwegian; "and when I have said I am Norse, I guess I have said enough. I am firm of fiber, like the granite rocks of old Norway. The land there has a constitution, just like free America. It sets my fibers tickling to think of what I am, and to ring out my thoughts in words of the real old grit."

"But we have a complete literature," said the Danish rag; "do you understand what that is?"

"Understand!" repeated the Norwegian: "O this flatland creature! shall I give him a hoist uphill, and a Northern Light or two, clout as he is? When the Norway sun has thawed the ice, then come lubberly Danish hulks, bringing us butter and cheese, a right noble cargo; and they bring, too, by way of ballast, the Danish literature. We don't want it. One can do without stale beer in a land of sparkling springs, and up yonder is a natural well that was never bored; no, nor yet puffed into European notice by newsmongers, confederate jobbers, and book-making tourists in foreign parts. I speak free from the bottom of my

lungs, and the Dane must get used to free sound; and so he will some day, in his Scandinavian clamber up our proud mountain land—that primary knob of the universe!”

“A Danish rag could never talk like that; no!” said the Dane. “It is not our nature: I know myself: and all our rags are like me. We are so good-natured, so unassuming. We only think too little of ourselves. Not that we gain much by our modesty: but I do like it; I consider it quite charming. Still I am perfectly aware of my own good qualities, I assure you, but I don’t talk about them: nobody shall ever bring such a charge against me. I am gentle and complaisant; bear everything patiently, spite nobody, and speak good of all men—though there is not much good to be said of other people; but that is their business. I can afford to smile at it, I feel myself so much superior.”

“Have done with this flatland drivel; it turns me sick,” said the Norwegian, caught a puff of wind, and fluttered away from his own heap on to another.

Paper they both became, and, as chance would have it, the Norwegian rag became a sheet on which a Norseman wrote a true-love letter to a Danish girl; and the Danish rag became the manuscript for a Danish ode in honor of Norway’s strength and beauty.

Something good there may come even of rags, when they are once out of the dust heap, and the change has been made in favor of truth and beauty; they keep up a good understanding between us, and in that there is a blessing.

The story is done. It is rather pretty, and offensive to nobody except to Rags.

THE COURT CARDS

HOW MANY beautiful things may be cut out of and pasted on paper! Thus a castle was cut out and pasted, so large that it filled a whole table, and it was painted as if it were built of red stones. It had a shining copper roof, it had towers and a drawbridge, water in the canals just like plate glass, for it was plate glass, and in the highest tower stood a wooden watchman. He had a trumpet, but he did not blow it.

The whole belonged to a little boy, whose name was William. He raised the drawbridge himself and let it down again, made his tin soldiers march over it, opened the castle gate and looked into the large and elegant drawing room, where all the court cards of a pack—Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs, and Spades—hung in frames on the walls, like pic-

tures in real drawing rooms. The kings held each a scepter, and wore crowns; the queens wore veils flowing down over their shoulders, and in their hands they held a flower or a fan; the knaves had halberds and nodding plumes.

One evening the little boy peeped through the open castle gate, to catch a glimpse of the court cards in the drawing room, and it seemed to him that the kings saluted him with their scepters, that the Queen of Spades swung the golden tulip which she held in her hand, that the Queen of Hearts lifted her fan, and that all four queens graciously recognized him. He drew a little nearer, in order to see better, and that made him hit his head against the castle so that it shook. Then all the four knaves of Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs, and Spades, raised their halberds, to warn him that he must not try to get in that way.

The little boy understood the hint, and gave a friendly nod; he nodded again, and then said: "Say something!" but the knaves did not say a word. However, the third time he nodded, the Jack of Hearts sprang out of the card, and placed himself in the middle of the floor.

"What is your name?" the knave asked the little boy. "You have clear eyes and good teeth, but your hands are dirty: you do not wash them often enough!"

Now this was rather coarse language, but, of course, not much politeness can be expected from a knave. He is only a common fellow.

"My name is William," said the little boy, "and the castle is mine, and you are my Jack of Hearts!"

"No, I am not. I am my king's and my queen's knave, not yours!" said the Jack of Hearts. "I am not obliged to stay here. I can get down off the card, and out of the frame too, and so can my gracious king and queen, even more easily than I. We can go out into the wide world, but that is such a wearisome march: we have grown tired of it; it is more convenient, more easy, more agreeable, to be sitting in the cards, and just to be ourselves!"

"Have all of you really been human beings once?" asked little William.

"Human beings!" repeated the Jack of Hearts. "Yes, we have; but not so good as we ought to have been! Please now light a little wax candle (I like a red one best, for that is the color of my king and queen); then I will tell the lord of the castle—I think you said you were the lord of the castle, did you not?—our whole history; but for goodness' sake, don't interrupt me, for if I speak, it must be done without any interruption whatever. I am in a great hurry! Do you see my king, I mean the King of Hearts? He is the oldest of the four kings there, for he was born first—born with a golden crown and a golden apple. He began to rule at once. His queen was born with a golden fan; that she

still has. They both were very agreeably situated, even from infancy. They did not have to go to school, they could play the whole day, build castles, and knock them down, marshal tin soldiers for battle, and play with dolls. When they asked for buttered bread, then there was butter on both sides of the bread, and powdered brown sugar, too, nicely spread over it. It was the good old time, and was called the Golden Age; but they grew tired of it, and so did I. Then the King of Diamonds took the reins of government!"

The knave said nothing more. Little William waited to hear something further, but not a syllable was uttered; so presently he asked—"Well, and then?"

The Jack of Hearts did not answer; he stood up straight, silent, bold, and stiff, his eyes fixed upon the burning wax candle. Little William nodded; he nodded again but no reply. Then he turned to the Jack of Diamonds; and when he had nodded to him three times, up he sprang out of the card, in the middle of the floor, and uttered only one single word—

"Wax candle!"

Little William understood what he meant, and immediately lighted a red candle, and placed it before him. Then the Jack of Diamonds presented arms, for that is a token of respect, and said—

"Then the King of Diamonds succeeded to the throne! He was a king with a pane of glass on his breast; also the queen had a pane of glass on her breast, so that people could look right into her. For the rest, they were formed like other human beings, and were so agreeable and so handsome, that a monument was erected in honor of them, which stood for seven years without falling. Properly speaking, it should have stood forever, for so it was intended; but from some unknown reasons, it fell." Then the Jack of Diamonds presented arms, out of respect for his king, and he looked fixedly on his red wax candle.

But now at once, without any nod or invitation from little William, the Jack of Clubs stepped out, grave and proud, like the stork that struts with such a dignified air over the green meadow. The black clover leaf in the corner of the card flew like a bird beyond the knave, and then flew back again, and stuck itself where it had been sticking before. And without waiting for his wax candle, the Jack of Clubs spoke—

"Not all get butter on both sides of the bread, and brown powdered sugar on that. My king and queen did not get it. They had to go to school, and learn what they had not learnt before. They also had a pane of glass on their breasts, but nobody looked through it, except to see if there was not something wrong with their works inside, in order to find, if possible, some reason for giving them a scolding! I know it; I have served my king and queen all my lifetime; I know everything

about them, and obey their commands. They bid me say nothing more tonight. I keep silent, therefore, and present arms!"

But little William was a kindhearted boy, so he lighted a candle for this knave also, a shining white one, white like snow. No sooner was the candle lighted, than the Jack of Spades appeared in the middle of the drawing room. He came hurriedly; yet he limped, as if he had a sore leg. Indeed, it had once been broken, and he had had, moreover many ups and down in his life. He spoke as follows—

"My brother jacks have each got a candle, and I shall also get one; I know that. But if we poor jacks have so much honor, our kings and queens must have thrice as much. Now, it is proper that my King of Spades and my Queen of Spades should have *four* candles to gladden them. An additional honor ought to be conferred upon them. Their history and trials are so doleful, that they have very good reason to wear mourning, and to have a grave digger's spade on their coat of arms. My own fate, poor knave that I am, is deplorable enough. In one game at cards, I have got the nickname of 'Black Peter'!* But alas! I have got a still uglier name, which, indeed, it is hardly the thing to mention aloud," and then he whispered, "In another game, I have been nicknamed 'Dirty Mads'! † I, who was once the King of Spades' Lord Chamberlain! Is not this a bitter fate? The history of my royal master and queen I will not relate; they don't wish me to do so! Little lord of the castle, as he calls himself, may guess it himself if he chooses, but it is very lamentable—O, no doubt about that! Their circumstances have become very much reduced, and are not likely to change for the better, until we are all riding on the red horse higher than the skies, where there are no haps and mishaps!"

Little William now lighted, as the Jack of Spades had said was proper, three candles for each of the kings, and three for each of the queens; but for the King and Queen of Spades he lighted four candles apiece, and the whole drawing room became as light and transparent as the palace of the richest emperor, and the illustrious kings and queens bowed to each other serenely and graciously. The Queen of Hearts made her golden fan bow; and the Queen of Spades swung her golden tulip in such a way, that a stream of fire issued from it. The royal couples alighted from the cards and frames, and moved in a slow and graceful minuet up and down the floor. They were dancing in the very midst of flames, and the knaves were dancing too.

* Black Peter is the name of a game in Denmark, where it is called *Sorte Peer*, the word *sorte* denoting black. When the cards are dealt, he who happens to get the Jack of Spades is all the evening nicknamed Black Peter by his fellow players, who paint his face black.

† Dirty Mads is another Danish game. *Mads* is a name almost exclusively in use amongst the peasantry.

But alas! the whole drawing room was soon in a blaze; the devouring element roared up through the roof, and all was one crackling and hissing sheet of fire; and in a moment little William's castle itself was enveloped in flames and smoke. The boy became frightened, and ran off, crying to his father and mother—"Fire, fire, fire! my castle is on fire!" He grew pale as ashes, and his little hands trembled like the aspen-leaf. The fire continued sparkling and blazing, but in the midst of this destructive scene, the following words were uttered in a singing tone—

"Now we are riding on the red horse, higher than the skies! This is the way for kings and queens to go, and this is the way for their knaves to go after them!"

Yes! that was the end of William's castle, and of the court cards. William did not perish in the flames; he is still alive, and he washed his small hands, and said: "I am innocent of the destruction of the castle." And, indeed, it was not his fault that the castle was burned down.

THE DRYAD

A WONDER STORY OF THE TIME OF THE EXHIBITION IN
PARIS, 1867

WE ARE GOING to Paris to see the Exhibition.

Now we are there! It was a journey performed without witchcraft—we went by steam, in a ship, and on a country road. Our time is the time of wonder stories.

Now we are in the midst of Paris, in a large hotel. Flowers adorn the staircase, and soft carpets are spread over the steps. Our room is a pleasant one; the door to the balcony stands open, and we look out upon an open square. Down there lives Spring, who was driven to town in a wagon. He arrived at the same time with us; he came in the shape of a slender young chestnut tree, with opening leaves. Look, how beautifully the tree is dressed in spring's elegant robe, finer than all the other trees on the square; one of them, I see, has just stepped out of the row of living trees, and there it lies with its roots torn up and thrown mercilessly upon the ground; here where this tree stood will the chestnut tree be planted, and there it will grow.

As yet, the chestnut tree stands erect upon the heavy cart which brought it here this very morning from the country, a distance of a good many miles. There it grew, and lived its young life close to an old oak.

To this old oak was the pious old pastor wont to come and sit under its shading branches, and tell over and over again his stories to the listening children. The young chestnut tree was, of course, among the listeners.

The Dryad within this tree was then yet a child; she could remember so far back, when the chestnut tree was so small that it scarcely could peep over the grass blades and other small plants. These were then as large as they ever would be, but the tree grew and became bigger every year, drinking air, and sunshine, and dew, and rain. Many times was it shaken and bent hither and thither by the powerful winds. This was a part of its education.

The Dryad was pleased with her life, and the company of the sunshine, and the songs of birds; yet the human voice she liked best, for she knew the language of men as well as that of the animals, butterflies, beetles, and bumblebees. Everything that could fly or creep paid her a visit, and every one of them that came would gossip. They talked about the farms, the village, the woods, the old castle, with its park: in that were dikes and canals, and down in their waters dwelled also living beings, that could fly, in their own way, under water from place to place, beings with a will and with skill, but they never said anything: they were too wise. The swallow, which had dived down into the water, told her of the pretty goldfishes, the fat bream, the sturdy perch, and the old moss-grown crucian. The swallow gave a very fair description, but it is always much better to go and look for one's self.

But how could the Dryad ever be able to see all these things with her own eyes? She had to be satisfied with her view of the beautiful landscape, and to listen to the buzz of human industry as it passed by her. Charming as all this was, there was something better; and that was when the old pastor told of France there under that oak tree, and of the great deeds done by men and women whose names are remembered through all time with admiration. The Dryad thus heard of the shepherdess Joan of Arc, of Charlotte Corday; she heard of times much farther back, and of Henry the Fourth and Napoleon I, yes, she even heard of the ability and greatness of our own time; she heard of names, every one of which resounded deep in the heart of the people. France is the world's country, the world's gathering place of genius, with the Crater of Liberty in its midst.

The village children listened attentively, the Dryad not less so; she was a schoolmate of them all. In the shapes of the sailing clouds, she would see picture after picture of those things that she had heard about.

The cloud heaven was her picture book. She thought she was very happy in this beautiful France, yet she began to think that the birds and everything that could fly were much more favored by fate than she was. Even a fly could look far beyond our Dryad's horizon

Beautiful France was so extensive, yet she could only see a very small portion of it. World-wide was the extent of her lands, with their meadows, forests, and cities, and of the last, Paris was the most glorious, the mightiest! Thither the birds could fly, but not she.

There was then among the village children a little girl. She was very ragged and poor, but very fair to look upon for all that. And she was always singing and laughing, and she tied red flowers in her black hair.

"Don't go to Paris," said the good old pastor; "poor child, if you do go there, it will be your ruin!"

And yet she went. The Dryad thought very often of her; they both had the same longing and desire to see the great city.

Spring came, and summer came, autumn and winter passed by, and thus a few years went. The Dryad's tree produced its first chestnut blossoms, the birds were chirping and chatting about them in the brilliant sunlight.

Once it so happened that a grand carriage, with a noble lady in it, came driving that way: she herself drove the beautiful and fiery horses. A little footman in livery sat behind. The Dryad recognized her; the old pastor recognized her: he shook his head and said mournfully, "Thou didst go there: it proved thy ruin, poor Mary!"

"She poor!" thought the Dryad; "it cannot be! What a change! She is dressed like a duchess: that's what she came to in the city of enchantment. O if I could only get there and live in all that splendor and magnificence! the light and glory of that city reaches even up to the skies—just above there where I know the city stands." And in that direction would the Dryad look every evening, all night. There she saw the brilliant streak of light along the horizon. In the bright and clear moonlight night she missed it very much, and missed the sailing clouds that pictured to her the great city and its history.

Children take to their picture books. The Dryad took to her cloud book—that was her book of thoughts. The balmy, cloudless sky was to her a blank leaf, and at this time she had not seen such a one for several days; it was summer time, with hot, sultry days, without a cooling breeze; every flower, every leaf was drooping, and men hung their heads. The clouds drew together and were lifted up, as it happened, at that corner where the night announced, with a brilliant sheen, "Here is Paris."

The clouds rolled up and above each other, forming themselves into mountains; they made their way through the air and spread themselves over the whole landscape as far as the Dryad could see. They were heaped in mighty blue-black boulders, layer above layer, rising high in the air, and then flashes of light came flying out from them. "These are also God our master's servants" had the old pastor said. And forth

came a great, blue, brilliant light, a blaze of lightning, that tried to look like the sun himself; it shattered the boulders.

The lightning had struck down—struck the mighty old oak tree, splitting it to the very roots—shattered the crown, parted its stem. The old tree fell down: it fell as if spreading itself to receive the messenger of light. Not even the biggest gun could so roar through the air and over the land at the birth of a king's child, as the thunder did there at the decease of the old oak tree, the king of the forest. Now the rain poured down, a refreshing breeze sprang up, the storm had passed, a sacred calm rested upon the country. The village people came gathering around the old oak, the venerable pastor spoke a few words in its praise, a painter drew a sketch of the old tree for a memento.

"Everything goes away," said the Dryad, "goes away, as the clouds go, never to return."

Never again came the pastor there. The roof of the schoolhouse had fallen, the pulpit was broken. The children came no more, but autumn came, and winter came, and then also spring. During the whole of this time were the Dryad's eyes directed towards that spot where, every evening and night, far away on the horizon. Paris shone like a radiant belt. Out of Paris leaped locomotive after locomotive, one train after another, whistling and thundering, and that at all times. At all times of the day, in the evening, at midnight, did trains arrive, and out of these and into them did people from all the lands of the world crowd. A new wonder of the world had called them to Paris. How did this wonder exhibit itself?

"A gorgeous flower of art and industry," they said, "has sprung up from the barren sands of the Champ de Mars. It is a giant sunflower, out of the leaves of which one can study geography, statistics, general information; become inspired by art and poetry, learn the greatness and products of every country." "A marvelous flower it is," said others; "a large lotus plant, that spreads its green leaves, shot up in early spring, as widely as a threshing floor. Summer will see it in all its glory, and the autumn storms will blow it away, that neither leaves nor roots will remain. In front of the military school stretches the arena of war in time of peace—a field without grass or flower, a piece of the desert cut out from a wilderness in Africa, where Fata Morgana shows her mysterious air castles and suspended gardens. There, upon the Champ de Mars, were they still more brilliant, more strange, than as visions only." "The palace of the modern Aladdin is erected," said others. "Day after day, hour after hour, does it unfold more and more of its new splendor."

The boundless halls shine in marble and colors. The giant with no blood in his veins, moves his steel and iron limbs here in that great

outer circle.* Works of art, in metal and stone, loudly proclaim the powerful life of the mind that labors in all the lands of the world. Here is picture gallery and flower show; and everything that hand and mind can create in the workshops of the mechanic is here placed on exhibition. Even old castles and peat bogs have contributed their relics of antiquity. The overpowering, gorgeous show must be pictured in miniature and squeezed into the compass of a toy before we can comprehend and see it in its entirety.

Upon the Champ de Mars stood, as upon a big Christmas table, Aladdin's castles of art and industry; around these castles were placed toys from every country, toys of grandeur; every nation found a memento of its home.

Here was the palace of the Egyptian king; there, a caravanseraï from the desert. The Bedouin rode past: he came from the land of the sun; and here was a Russian stable, with beautiful, fiery horses, brought from the plains. There stood the small, straw-thatched Danish peasant house, with its Danebrog's flag, neighbor to Gustavus Vasa's neat wooden cottage from Dalarne. American blockhouses, English cottages, French pavilions, kiosks, churches, and theatres, were all spread about in a wonderful manner. And then, in the middle of all this, there was the green turf, there was clear running water, there were flowering shrubs, rare trees, glass houses where one might imagine one's self to be in a tropic forest. Complete rose gardens, brought here from Damascus, bloomed in their glory under glass roofs. What colors, what fragrance! Stalactite caverns, artificially made, containing in fresh and salt water ponds specimens of various fishes; it was like standing on the shore of the ocean, among fishes, and reptiles, and polyps.

So they talked, and said that all these things were now exhibited on the Champ de Mars, and that all over this festive board crawled an immense crowd of human beings, like a swarm of ants on a journey; they either went on foot or were drawn in little wagons. Not every man's legs can stand the fatigues of such endless wandering.

From the earliest rays of dawn till late at night they are wandering to that field. Steamer after steamer, crowded full with men, glides down the river Seine. The crowd of carriages increases continually, the multitude of people on foot and on horseback increases, all public conveyances are crammed, are stuffed, are fringed over with human beings; and all these various streams move towards one goal—the Paris Exhibition.

Every entrance is decorated with a French flag, and all around the walls of the great bazaar for all countries float the flags of the different

* The machinery at the Exhibition was placed in the outer circle, and was kept in operation.—Ed.

nations. A burring and a buzzing continually sounds from the hall of machines; down from the towers come the ring of chimes; organs sound their voices in the churches, mingled with the hoarse and nasal strains from the Oriental coffeehouses. It is all a Babel empire, a Babel language, a world's wonder.

I assure you that all this was really so; at least so the story goes, and who has not heard of it? The Dryad knew it all, she knew all that has here been said of the wonder of the world in the great city of cities. "Hurry, all ye birds, fly thither and see, and then come back and tell me all about it," was the Dryad's prayer.

The longing grew till it became a wish, and that grew to be the thought of her life, and then—

The full moon was shining on that silent, solemn night, and from her dial there came forth (this the Dryad saw) a spark, bright, like a falling star, and it fell at the foot of the tree, whose branches began to shiver as if shaken by a gust of wind, and then there stood a shining being. It spoke with a voice as clear and loud as a doomsday's trumpet, which kisses to life and calls to judgment. "Thou shalt become free to go to the city of enchantments; thou shalt there take root, get acquainted with the buzzing streams, the air, and the sunshine there, but thy lifetime will be shortened; the long row of years that were awaiting thee here in God's open fields will shrink to a small sum. Poor Dryad, it will be thy ruin. Thy longing will grow, thy desire, thy craving become louder, the tree itself will become a prison to thee. Thou wilt leave thy shelter, cast off thy nature; thou wilt fly out and mix with men, and then thy years will shrivel into the half of a day-fly's life-time, to one night only. The light of thy life will be blown out, the tree will pine away, the leaves will wither, never to return."

Thus rang the words, thus sang the voice, and the shining being disappeared, but not the Dryad's longing and desire; she trembled in expectation, in a violent fever of anticipated enjoyment. With exultation she exclaimed—

"Life is going to commence, floating, like the clouds, whither no one knows." At early dawn, when the moon grew pale and the skies red, came the time of fulfillment; the words of promise were to be verified. There came people armed with spades and pickaxes; they dug clear around the roots of the tree, they dug down right under them; then there came a cart drawn by two horses, and they lifted the tree with its roots and the earth they clung to out of the ground, and wound mats around them, making a warm foot-bag, and then they put the tree upon the cart and tied it securely, because it was now to go on a journey to Paris, and it was to stay there and grow in the great city of France, in the city of cities.

The branches and leaves of the chestnut tree shook and trembled when they commenced digging. The Dryad trembled, but with the rapture of expectation.

"Forward, forward!" sounded every pulse beat. "Forward, forward!" rang the trembling words of desire. The Dryad forgot, in her happiness, to take leave of her homestead's surroundings, of the swaying grass blades and the innocent daisies that had looked up to her as to a great lady in our Father's garden, a young princess that played shepherdess here in the country.

At last the chestnut tree was upon the cart, nodding with its branches "farewell," or "forward." The Dryad knew it not; she only thought of and dreamed about the new unknown, and yet well-known, which should now unfold itself. No guileless heart of an innocent child was ever more filled with thought, than she was on her journey to Paris.

No farewell, but always, "Forward, forward!" The cartwheels turned ceaselessly round and round, the far away grew into near by, and then was left behind. The country changed, as her clouds changed. New fields, woods, farms, villas, and gardens came in sight. The chestnut tree moved on, the Dryad moved forward with it. Locomotive after locomotive went dashing by her. The locomotives blew clouds that took shapes of beings, who spoke of Paris, the place they came from, whither the Dryad was going.

As a matter of course, everything around her knew what way she was going. She was aware that every tree that she passed stretched out its branches toward her and begged, "Take me along with you: take me also." There lives in every tree a longing Dryad.

What wonderful changes! It seemed as if the houses came springing right out of the ground, more and more, closer and closer. Chimney pots came up, as if so many flowerpots had been placed behind one another and alongside each other upon the house roofs. Large inscriptions, with letters a yard long, had the sorceress painted upon the walls; they reached to the roof and glittered brightly.

"Where does Paris begin, and when will I come to it?" thought the Dryad. Soon the crowd of people increased, the tumult and noise grew louder. Carriage followed carriage, people went on foot and rode on horseback, and on each side of her were shops, and all about sounded music, song, talking, and screeching.

Now the Dryad, in her tree, had arrived in the middle of Paris.

The heavy cart stopped in an open place where some trees were planted; all around were high houses; every window had a balcony of its own, from which people looked down upon that young, fresh chestnut tree which came driving in a cart; it was destined to be planted there in the place of a dying, uprooted tree that lay outstretched upon

the ground. People that came passing by stopped awhile, smiling upon that fresh, green piece of early spring. The older trees, whose leaves were yet scarcely budding, nodded their welcome to her with rustling branches: "Welcome, welcome!" said they; and the fountain which played with its water in the air, that fell prattling down again into the wide basin, permitted the wind to carry a few drops to the newly arrived tree, offering her a welcome drink.

Then the Dryad perceived how its tree was taken down from the cart and put in its place of destination. After that the roots were carefully covered with earth, and covered with fresh green sward. Shrubs were also planted, and earthen pots dug down with flowers in them.

And thus quite a nice garden appeared in the center of the square. The uprooted and dying tree, filled with bad-smelling gas and drainage air, and all the rest of the plant-torturing air of the city, was thrown upon a cart and carried away. The crowd looked on, children and old people sat about in the green, looking through the fresh leaves. And we, that talk all about this, stood on the balcony, looking down upon the young tree just arrived from the fresh country air, and said what the old pastor would have said, had he been there, "Poor Dryad!"

"Happy am I, and thrice happy," said the Dryad; "and yet I cannot quite comprehend it. I cannot speak what I feel; it seems all to be as I imagined it, and yet it is not quite what I thought it would be."

The houses were so high, so near. The sun only shone upon one wall, and that was covered with handbills and placards, around which the people would crowd and throng. Carriages drove by, big and small, light and heavy: omnibuses, like moving houses, filled to overflowing, came rattling by. Drays and gigs insisted upon having the same right.

"But will not," thought the Dryad. "will not these overgrown houses that stand so oppressively near, also take themselves off and make room for other shapes and forms, as the clouds of heaven do? Why don't they slip aside, that I may get a glimpse into Paris, and far beyond Paris?" She wanted to see Notre Dame, the Vendôme Column, and the many works of wonder, that had called and were calling so many people there. But the houses would not move from their places. The lanterns were lit when it was yet quite daylight. Brilliant rays of gas came bursting forth from all the shop windows, and lighting up the trees and their branches, so that it almost looked like summer's sunlight. But the stars above looked exactly the same as the Dryad had seen them at home. She thought she felt a breeze, so pure and balmy. A feeling of new strength came over her, and she felt it communicated to the very tips of the leaves and roots. Now she knew that she was within the living world of men, looked upon with tender eyes; there were tumult, tones, colors, and light all around her.

Wind instruments sent their tones to her from the cross streets; hand organs, with feet-stirring melodies, were indefatigable. Yes, to dance, to dance to pleasures and amusement did they invite. It was a music that might make men, horses, carriages, trees, and houses dance, if they only knew how. All this created an intoxicating desire for enjoyment in the Dryad's heart.

"What a blessed life I lead! how beautiful this all is!" exclaimed she in the highest glee: "I am in Paris."

The day that came, the night that followed, and then the next day, brought the same show, the same turmoil, the same life, changing, but always the same changes.

"By this time I really know every tree, every flower, on this place; I know every house, balcony, and shop here, where they have stuck me, in this little corner, in which I can see nothing of the great city. Where are the arches of triumph, the Boulevards, and that world's wonder? Nothing of all this am I able to see. I am imprisoned here among these high houses, which I know by heart, with their inscriptions, placards, handbills, and all the painted dainties, for which I have lost all appetite. Where is that of which I heard them speak, which I have known and longed for, and for which I wanted to come here? What have I got, what gained, what found? I long as I did before. I have a consciousness of a life I wish to lead. I want to be among the living and move with them; I want to fly like a bird, see and feel, and become like a human being: I would rather live but the half of a day, than spend a life of years in daily idleness, in which I sicken, sink, and fall, like a rush in a meadow. I want to sail along like the clouds, bathe in the sun of life, look down upon all below as the clouds do, and go away as they do, nobody knows whither."

This was the Dryad's sigh, going up in a prayer—

"Take all my years of life; give me but the half of a day; set me free from my prison; grant me human life, human happiness, though it be but for a short time—for only this night, and punish me if thou wilt for my longing—for my inexpressible longing for life. Give me freedom, give me liberty, even if this dwelling of mine, this fresh and youthful tree, wither, be cut down, be converted into ashes, and blown about by the winds."

A rustling went through the branches of the tree; a strange sensation crept over it; the leaves shivered: it was as if sparks of fire were leaping forth from them; a gust of wind shook the crown of the tree; and then issued forth a being—the Dryad herself. Amazed, she found herself sitting beneath the green boughs, rich with leaves and lit up by a thousand gas flames from all around—sitting there, young and handsome

as poor Mary, to whom it had been said—"Alas! the great city will be thy ruin."

The Dryad sat at the foot of the tree, at the door of her house, which she had locked and then had thrown the key away. So young, so handsome! The stars saw her, the stars were twinkling; the gas flames saw her, they were beaming, beckoning to her; how slender she was, and yet so strong; a child, and yet a young woman. Her dress was glossy like silk, green as the fresh leaves on the top of the tree. In her nut-brown hair stuck a half-opened flower of the chestnut tree. She looked a very goddess of spring.

A moment there, and then she bounded off like a gazelle, off around the corner; she danced and skipped like the ray that is darted from a mirror, like the sunbeam thrown, now here, now there, according to the motion of the glass; and if one looked sharp, and was able to see what could be seen, he would have thought it marvelous. Whenever she rested awhile, the color of her dress and of her form was changed, according to the nature of the place where she stood and the lights that fell upon her.

She arrived on the Boulevards; there was a complete ocean of light from gas lamps, stores, and cafes. Here were rows of trees, young and slender, whose Dryads received their share of the artificial sunlight. The sidewalk seemed to be one large parlor, with tables containing all sorts of refreshments, from Champagne and Chartreux down to coffee and beer; here too were exhibitions of flowers, statues, and pictures, and there were books, and many other interesting things.

From the steps of the high houses she looked down upon the streams roaring along under the rows of trees. There was an ever-swelling and ebbing tide of rolling wagons, cabriolets, chariots, omnibuses, coaches, of men riding on horseback, and of marching regiments. Life and limb were in danger if anyone attempted to cross to the other side. Now a blue light was shining brightest, then the gaslights were most brilliant, and suddenly a rocket went up—whence? whither?

This must be the great highway of the world's great city. Now she listened to some delightful Italian music. Now to Spanish songs, accompanied by castanets; but the melodies from Minutet's musical box drowned every other sound, that stirring Cancan music which Orpheus never knew and the beautiful Helen never heard. I think the very wheelbarrows would have danced on their one wheel had they known how. But the Dryad did dance; she whirled and soared, changing colors like a hummingbird in sunlight, for every house, with its interior, was reflected upon her.

As the glorious flower of the lotus, torn from its roots, is carried

away by the river in its whirls, so was the Dryad rushed along, and when she stopped she changed into another form; therefore, nobody could follow, none recognize her. Everything passed by like cloud pictures, face after face, of which she recognized none, and no familiar being of home appeared to her.

Before her mind came two beaming eyes: she thought at once of Mary, poor Mary! the handsome, gay child, with the red flowers in her black hair—was she not in the world's great city, rich and charming as she passed in the carriage the house of the pastor, the Dryad's own tree, and the old oak? Surely, she must be in this deafening uproar, perhaps had just alighted from that magnificent carriage waiting there. Brilliant carriages, with richly gallooned coachmen and servants, were drawn up in a row. The great folks alighting from them were all ladies—beautifully dressed ladies. They went through the open, trellised porch, ascended the broad and high steps that led into that imposing building with marble columns. Was this, perhaps, the great wonder of the world? And there Mary must surely be!

Sancta Maria! she heard singing there; clouds of frankincense were rolling forth from under the high arch, painted and gilt, where twilight reigned. It was the Church of the Madeleine.

Dressed all in black of the most costly material, made after the finest and latest fashion, the ladies of the aristocracy stepped over the polished floor. Coats of arms blazed forth from the clasps of magnificent prayer books, and were embroidered upon strongly perfumed handkerchiefs lined with costly Brussels lace. A few of the women bent kneeling in silent prayers before the high altar, others went to the confessor's box. The Dryad felt very uneasy, as if she ought not to be in this place. It was the house of silence, the great hall of mystery and secrecy. Everything was spoken in whispers and confided in soundless words.

The Dryad became aware that she also was wrapped up in a black silken veil, resembling the other noble ladies of the empire. Was every one of them a child of longing and desire like herself?

A deep sigh was heard through the silence—deep and fraught with pain; whence came it—from the confessional, or from the bosom of the Dryad? She drew the veil closer about her. The breath she drew was church incense, not the fresh and moist air. She felt that this was not the place she longed for.

"Forward, forward! without rest; the insect of a day's life has no rest: her flight is her life."

The Dryad was out again under the gas chandeliers and fountains.

"Not all the jets from the fountain can wash away the blood of the innocents slain here."

These words were spoken. Here she heard strangers speak very loud and lively, which nobody dared to do in the great hall of secrecy from which the Dryad had just come.

She saw a big stone slab being turned—why, she did not understand; but she went near and looked down an opening into the depth of the earth. Down the descent they went, leaving the starlit sky, the brilliant gas flames, and all the living life.

"I am afraid! I dare not go down. I care little to see all the wonders there; stay here with me!"

"And go home?" said a man; "leave Paris without having seen the most remarkable thing, the wonder-work of modern times?" she heard voices say.

The Dryad heard and understood it. Now the goal of her greatest longing was reached at last, and here was the entrance, down to the deep, down, under Paris. This she could never have thought, but she saw it, and saw the strangers descend, and she followed.

The steps were made of cast iron, spiral shaped, broad, and comfortable; a lamp gave a dim light, and deeper down another. She found herself in a labyrinth of endless halls and vaults, crossing each other. All the streets and lanes of Paris were clearly seen there, as if reflected in a looking-glass. One could read the names of them, and every house above had here its number, its root, that shot down under the lonely macadamized sidewalk, and was squeezing its course along a wide canal with its onward rolling drainage. Above this was the aqueduct of the fresh and running water, and again, above this, hung, like a network, gas pipes and telegraph wires. Further on shone lamps, as if they were refracted images from the world's city above. Now and then a rumbling noise was heard overhead: it came from the heavy wagons that drove over the bridges of descent.

Where was the Dryad?

You have heard of the catacombs: they are nothing compared to this world under ground, this wonder of our times, the Cloacas of Paris. There was the Dryad, and not in the World's Exhibition on the Champ de Mars.

Exclamations of astonishment, admiration, approbation, were heard all around.

"Out of the deep here," they said, "grows now health and long life for thousands above. Our time is the time of progress with all its blessings."

This was the opinion of men, men's talk, but not that of the scavengers that built, lived, and fed here—the rats; they piped from cracks in a piece of an old stone wall so distinctly as to be understood by the Dryad. A tall and old tail-bitten rat piped in a shrill voice his misgivings,

his afflictions, and the only idea his mind held; and his whole family approved of every word he said.

"I am deeply oppressed by the miao, the human miao, of intolerable ignorance. No doubt everything is very fine now, with gas and petroleum; I do not eat such things. It has become so clean here now, and so light, that one sits and is ashamed, and doesn't know what one is ashamed of. I wish we lived in the good old times of the goblins; they are not so far back, those times—those romantic times as they are called."

"What are you talking about?" asked the Dryad; "I have never seen you before. What are you speaking of?"

"Of the glorious old days!" said the rat; "great-grandfather and great-grandmother rat's time of youth. In those times it was a great undertaking to come down here. That was the time for rats all over Paris! Pestmother used to dwell down here then: she killed men, but never rats. Robbers and smugglers hatched their plans here unmolested. Then this was the asylum for the most interesting characters I ever saw, personages that one only sees now upon the melodramatic stages. The romantic time has passed away, even with us rats; we have got fresh air—and petroleum."

In this strain did the rats pipe—piped over the new times, piped in honor of the good old time with its pestmother.

By this time they came to a carriage, a sort of omnibus, drawn by two ponies. The company entered and drove along the Boulevard Sebastopol—that is, upon the one underground; right above in Paris was the well-known Boulevard, always overflowing with human beings.

The wagon disappeared in the twilight; the Dryad disappeared also, but came to light again under the glare of the gas flames in the open air. Here was the wonder to be found, and not in the crossing and re-crossing vaults and their damp atmosphere; here she found the world's wonder which she had looked for during her short lifetime. There it was, bursting forth in far richer glory than all the gaslights above, much stronger than the moon, which was silently gliding along.

And she saw it greeting her, winking and twinkling, like Venus in the vault of heaven.

She observed a brilliant porch opening into a garden, filled with light and dance music. She saw artificial lakes and ponds, surrounded by water plants artistically made of tinsel, bent and painted; they threw water jets up in the air from their chalices, that sparkled like diamonds in the brilliant light. Graceful weeping willows—real, spring-clad, weeping willows—let their fresh green branches, like a transparent veil, hang in curving waves. A burning bowl among the shrubbery threw its red light over half-lit love bowers, through which magic tones of

music rushed, thrilling the ears, fooling and alluring and chasing the blood through the limbs of human beings.

Young women did she see, beautiful, and in evening dress, with confiding smiles on their lips, and with the carelessness of youth and laughing mirth. A "Mary," with roses in her hair, but without carriage or footman. How they rolled and swung in that wild dance! what was up, and what was down? They jumped, they laughed and smiled, as if bitten by a tarantula; they looked so happy, so gay, as if ready to embrace the whole world out of pure enjoyment.

The Dryad felt herself irresistibly drawn into the dance. Her small, delicate foot was encased in a silken shoe, chestnut-brown, like the ribbon that came fluttering from her hair, down upon her uncovered shoulders. The green skirt enveloped her in large folds, but did not hide the beautifully shaped legs and her pretty feet, that seemed intent upon describing the magic circle in the air, in front of her dancing cavalier's head. Was she in Armida's enchanted garden? What was the name of this palace? In blazing jets the gas flames outside said—*Mabille*.

With shouts, clapping of hands, rockets, running water, together with popping of champagne bottles, the dance was bacchanalian; and then, above all this, in the serene sky, sailed the moon, a shining ship in the shape of a face. The sky was clear and pure, without a cloud, and one thought of looking right into heaven from Mabille.

A consuming, intoxicating sensation seized the Dryad, like the effect from opium. Her eyes talked, her lips spoke, but her words were not heard, drowned by the tones of flute and violin. Her cavalier whispered words in her ears, that rolled on with the time of the cancan; she understood them not, we do not understand them. He stretched his arms out toward her, around her—and embraced only the transparent, gas-filled air. The Dryad was carried away by the wind, as he carries a rose leaf; and when high in the air she saw a flame right ahead, a brilliant light, at the top of a tower. This light now surely came from the goal of her longing, shining from the red fire tower upon the "Fata Morgana" of the Champ de Mars, and thither was she carried by the spring breeze. She whirled several times around that tower; the workmen thought it was a butterfly that came fluttering down to die, having left its chrysalis too early in spring.

The moon was shining, and so were the gaslights and the lanterns in the large halls of the outspread buildings; they were shining upon the grass-covered hills, and upon the rocks put there by human skill, where waterfalls were precipitated by "Bloodless's" power. The depth of the ocean, and the fresh-water rivers, the empire of the fishes, were laid open here. One imagined oneself to be down at the bottom of the deep—down in the ocean, in a diving-bell. The water pressed hard to-

ward the thick glass walls. Polyyps, fathom-long, flexible, eel-like, quivering, living thorns, whose arms took hold, swaying up and down, grown fast to the bottom of the sea.

A large flounder was lying close by in deep thought, spreading himself with great comfort. A crab was crawling over him, like a hideous monster head; but the shrimps moved about swiftly and restlessly, as if they were ocean's moths and butterflies.

In the fresh-water aquaria grew many beautiful plants; goldfishes had arranged themselves in rows, like red cows on a pasture; they all poked their heads in one direction, for the purpose of getting the flow of the stream in their mouth. The thick and fat tenches were staring with their dull eyes at the glass walls; they knew they were in the Paris Exhibition; they knew they had made a fatiguing journey in vessels filled with water; that they had been on a railroad, had become landsick, as men become seasick upon the ocean. They had also come to see the Exhibition, and they saw it from their own salt or fresh water, and looked upon the swarms of men, that passed by all day long, from morning to night. All the lands of the world had sent their human specimen there, in order that the old bream, the strong perch, and the moss-grown carps, might see these creatures, and give their opinion about these different tribes.

"Man is a scalefish," said a small fish, "and changes his scales two or three times a day; they give mouth sounds—speak, they call it. We do not change, and we make ourselves understood in a much easier way, by the motions of the corners of our mouths, and a stare with our eyes. We have many advantages over men."

"Yet they have learned how to swim," said a fresh-water fish. "I hail from the great inland lake, and there men go into the water during the hot summer days; but before they do this, they strip off their scales, and then they swim. The frogs have taught them to do that; the hindlegs push and the forelegs row; but they cannot stand it long. They think they can resemble us, poor things; but it wouldn't do."

And the fish stared; they imagined that the same crowd of people that they had seen come in at daylight, was still there; they really thought that those shapes were the same that beat upon their nerves of observation from the very first day.

A small perch, with a pretty tiger skin, and an enviable round back, said he was assured that the mother of men was there; he had seen her.

"I have seen her also, and that very plainly," said a gold-colored tench. "She was a beautiful, well-shaped human being; she had our mouth corners and staring eyes, two balloons in the back, a down-hanging umbrella in front, a breathing curtain, and dingle dangle. I think,

verily, she ought to throw off all that stuff, and go as we do, according to Nature's command; and then she would look like an honorable tench, that is, so far as man can be like us." *

"What has become of him—that laced one—the he-man?" they asked.

"He drove about in a chair, he sat there with paper, ink, and pen in his hands, and wrote everything down. What was he about? They called him a journalist."

"Look! there he is, driving yet," said a moss-grown old-maid crucian, with a bit of the world's temptation sticking in her throat, so that she was quite hoarse. She once swallowed a fishhook, and since that she is swimming about in humility, with the hook in her throat.

"Journalist!" said she: "that is said like a fish, and properly understood, it's a sort of cuttlefish among men."

And thus the fishes went on talking in their own way. But within this artificial and water-filled cove, sounded yet the blows of hammers and the songs of artisans; they had to make use of the night, in order to get everything ready soon. These were songs in the Dryad's summer night dreams; she herself stood there, again to fly away and disappear.

"There are goldfish!" she exclaimed, nodding at them. "I am glad to have been allowed to see them. Yes, I do know you, and have known you a long while! The swallow told me about you in my own country home. How pretty and shiny, and how charming you are! I could kiss you, every one of you! I know the others also; this must be a crucian, and that is the delicate bream, and there swims the old moss-covered carp. I know you, but you do not know me!"

The fishes stared; they understood her not; they gazed in their dim twilight.

The Dryad was gone; she was in the open air, where the wonder flower of the world exhaled its fragrance from many lands: from the rye-bread land, from the codfish coast, the russia-leather country, the eau de cologne river bed, and rose-oil orient.

When, after a ball, we drive home in our carriage, the melodies we have heard continue to ring in our ears for some time; we may sing every one of them again, and, as in the slain man's eye the last impression which the eye had received remains photographed for some time, so remained yet the impress of the day's tumult and brilliancy upon the eye of night; it was neither absorbed nor blown away. The Dryad perceived it, and knew that it would thus continue to buzz quite into the morrow.

* The Tench evidently saw a lady dressed in the height of the prevailing fashion.—ED.

Now the Dryad was in the midst of fragrant roses, she thought she knew them, and that they were all from her own country; the roses from the castle's park and the pastor's garden.

She also recognized the red pomegranate; just such a one had Mary worn in her coal-black hair. The memory of her childhood's home in the country came twinkling in her thoughts; eagerly she drank in with her eyes the wonderful sights around her, while a feverish longing seized her, and carried her through the marvelous halls. She felt tired, and the fatigue increased. She felt a strong desire to rest upon the soft, outspread oriental cushions, or dive into the pure water, as the branches of the weeping willows did.

But the insect of a day has no rest; a few minutes, and the day would close. Her thoughts quivered, her limbs trembled, she sank down in the grass beside the babbling water.

"Thou springest from the earth with true life," she said; "cool my tongue, give me a refreshing drink."

"I am no living brook," said the water. "I run by machine."

"Give me some of thy freshness, thou green grass," begged the Dryad; "give me one of thy fragrant flowers."

"We shall die, if we are torn from our plant," answered grass blade and flower.

"Give me a kiss, thou cooling breeze; only a single kiss upon my lips!"

"The sun will soon kiss the clouds red," said the wind, "and then thou shalt be with the dead, gone, as all this magnificence will be gone before the year is out. And then I can again play with the light, loose sand upon this place, blow the dust all over the earth, dust in the air, and nothing but dust."

The Dryad felt an anguish coming over her, like the woman that, in a bath, having severed an artery, and bleeding to death, wishes still to live, while her strength, from loss of blood, leaves her. She got up, advanced a few paces, fell down again in front of a little church. The gate was open, light was burning on the altar, and the organ sang. What heavenly music! such tones had the Dryad never heard before, and yet she seemed to recognize well-known voices. They came from the depth of creation's great heart. She thought she heard the humming in the old oak tree, and heard the old pastor talk of great deeds of men of great fame, and what God's creations might give to the coming time, would give, and therewith itself win eternal life. The organ's tones became stronger and louder; they sang, and spoke in the song—

"Thy longing and desire tore thy roots from the place God had given them: it became thy ruin, poor Dryad!"

The organ's tones grew soft, and gentle; they sang plaintively, and

died away weeping. The clouds in the sky began to redden. The wind whispered and sang: "Go away, ye dead, the sun is rising."

His first ray fell upon the Dryad; her figure was radiant, changing colors, like a soap bubble just before it bursts, vanishes, becomes a drop, a tear, that falls upon the earth, and leaves nothing behind.

Poor Dryad, a dewdrop, only a tear, wept, and dried up!

The sun shone upon the Champ de Mars; Fata Morgana shone over great Paris, over the little square, with a few trees and a prattling fountain; over the high houses, where the chestnut tree stood, its branches hanging, its leaves dried up—the tree that only yesterday stood erect and fresh, resembling spring himself. "Now it is dead," said people; the Dryad had left it, passed away like the clouds, none knows whither.

And low upon the earth there lay a withered, broken chestnut flower. The holy water of the church could not recall it to life again. Man's foot soon stepped upon it, and crushed it in the dust.

All this has happened and been lived through. We ourselves have seen it, at the time of the Paris Exhibition, in 1867—in our time, in the great and wonderful time of Enchantment.

THE UGLY DUCKLING

IT WAS so glorious out in the country; it was summer; the cornfields were yellow, the oats were green, the hay had been put up in stacks in the green meadows, and the stork went about on his long red legs, and chattered Egyptian, for this was the language he had learned from his good mother. All around the fields and meadows were great forests, and in the midst of these forests lay deep lakes. Yes, it was right glorious out in the country. In the midst of the sunshine there lay an old farm, with deep canals about it, and from the wall down to the water grew great burdocks, so high that little children could stand upright under the loftiest of them. It was just as wild there as in the deepest wood, and here sat a Duck upon her nest; she had to hatch her ducklings; but she was almost tired out before the little ones came; and then she so seldom had visitors. The other ducks liked better to swim about in the canals than to run up to sit down under a burdock, and cackle with her.

At last one eggshell after another burst open. "Piep! piep!" it cried, and in all the eggs there were little creatures that stuck out their heads.

"Quack! quack!" they said; and they all came quacking out as fast

as they could, looking all round them under the green leaves; and the mother let them look as much as they chose, for green is good for the eye.

"How wide the world is!" said all the young ones, for they certainly had much more room now than when they were in the eggs.

"D'ye think this is all the world?" said the mother. "That stretches far across the other side of the garden, quite into the parson's field; but I have never been there yet. I hope you are all together," and she stood up. "No, I have not all. The largest egg still lies there. How long is that to last? I am really tired of it." And she sat down again.

"Well, how goes it?" asked an old Duck who had come to pay her a visit.

"It lasts a long time with that one egg," said the Duck who sat there. "It will not burst. Now, only look at the others; are they not the prettiest little ducks one could possibly see? They are all like their father: the rogue, he never comes to see me."

"Let me see the egg which will not burst," said the old visitor. "You may be sure it is a turkey's egg. I was once cheated in that way, and had much anxiety and trouble with the young ones, for they are afraid of the water. Must I say it to you, I could not get them to venture in. I quacked and I clacked, but it was no use. Let me see the egg. Yes, that's a turkey's egg. Let it lie there, and teach the other children to swim."

"I think I will sit on it a little longer," said the Duck. "I've sat so long now that I can sit a few days more."

"Just as you please," said the old Duck; and she went away.

At last the great egg burst. "Piep! piep!" said the little one, and crept forth. It was very large and very ugly. The Duck looked at it.

"It's a very large duckling," said she; "none of the others look like that: can it really be a turkey chick? Well, we shall soon find out. It must go into the water, even if I have to thrust it in myself."

The next day, it was bright, beautiful weather; the sun shone on all the green trees. The Mother Duck went down to the canal with all her family. Splash! she jumped into the water. "Quack! quack!" she said, and one duckling after another plunged in. The water closed over their heads, but they came up in an instant, and swam capitably; their legs went of themselves, and they were all in the water. The ugly gray Duckling swam with them.

"No, it's not a turkey," said she; "look how well it can use its legs, and how straight it holds itself. It is my own child! On the whole it's quite pretty, if one looks at it rightly. Quack! quack! come with me, and I'll lead you out into the great world, and present you in the duck

yard; but keep close to me, so that no one may tread on you, and take care of the cats!"

And so they came into the duck yard. There was a terrible riot going on in there, for two families were quarreling about an eel's head, and the cat got it after all.

"See, that's how it goes in the world!" said the Mother Duck; and she whetted her beak, for she too wanted the eel's head. "Only use your legs," she said. "See that you can bustle about, and bow your heads before the old Duck yonder. She's the grandest of all here; she's of Spanish blood—that's why she's so fat; and d'ye see? she has a red rag round her leg; that's something particularly fine, and the greatest distinction a duck can enjoy: it signifies that one does not want to lose her, and that she's to be known by the animals and by men too. Shake yourselves—don't turn in your toes; a well-brought-up duck turns its toes quite out, just like father and mother—so! Now bend your necks and say 'Quack!'"

And they did so: but the other ducks round about looked at them, and said quite boldly—

"Look there! now we're to have these hanging on, as if there were not enough of us already! And—fie!—how that Duckling yonder looks; we won't stand that!" And one duck flew up at it, and bit it in the neck.

"Let it alone," said the mother; "it does no harm to anyone."

"Yes, but it's too large and peculiar," said the Duck who had bitten it; "and therefore it must be put down."

"Those are pretty children that the mother has there," said the old Duck with the rag round her leg. "They're all pretty but that one; that was rather unlucky. I wish she could bear it over again."

"That cannot be done, my lady," replied the Mother Duck. "It is not pretty, but it has a really good disposition, and swims as well as any other; yes, I may even say it swims better. I think it will grow up pretty, and become smaller in time; it has lain too long in the egg, and therefore is not properly shaped." And then she pinched it in the neck, and smoothed its feathers. "Moreover it is a drake," she said, "and therefore it is not of so much consequence. I think he will be very strong: he makes his way already."

"The other ducklings are graceful enough," said the old Duck. "Make yourself at home; and if you find an eel's head, you may bring it me."

And now they were at home. But the poor Duckling which had crept last out of the egg, and looked so ugly, was bitten and pushed and jeered, as much by the ducks as by the chickens.

"It is too big!" they all said. And the turkey cock, who had been

born with spurs, and therefore thought himself an emperor, blew himself up like a ship in full sail, and bore straight down upon it; then he gobbled and grew quite red in the face. The poor Duckling did not know where it should stand or walk; it was quite melancholy because it looked ugly, and was the butt of the whole duck yard.

So it went on the first day; and afterwards it became worse and worse. The poor Duckling was hunted about by every one; even its brothers and sisters were quite angry with it, and said, "If the cat would only catch you, you ugly creature!" And the mother said, "If you were only far away!" And the ducks bit it, and the chickens beat it, and the girl who had to feed the poultry kicked at it with her foot.

Then it ran and flew over the fence, and the little birds in the bushes flew up in fear.

"That is because I am so ugly!" thought the Duckling; and it shut its eyes, but flew on further; and so it came out into the great moor, where the wild ducks lived. Here it lay the whole night long; and it was weary and downcast.

Towards morning the wild ducks flew up, and looked at their new companion.

"What sort of a one are you?" they asked; and the Duckling turned in every direction, and bowed as well as it could. "You are remarkably ugly!" said the Wild Ducks. "But that is nothing to us, so long as you do not marry into our family."

Poor thing! it certainly did not think of marrying, and only hoped to obtain leave to lie among the reeds and drink some of the swamp water.

Thus it lay two whole days; then came thither two wild geese, or, properly speaking, two wild ganders. It was not long since each had crept out of an egg, and that's why they were so saucy.

"Listen, comrade," said one of them. "You're so ugly that I like you. Will you go with us, and become a bird of passage? Near here, in another moor, there are a few sweet lovely wild geese, all unmarried, and all able to say 'Rap!' you've a chance of making your fortune, ugly as you are."

"Piff! paff!" resounded through the air; and the two ganders fell down dead in the swamp, and the water became blood red. "Piff! paff!" it sounded again, and the whole flock of wild geese rose up from the reeds. And then there was another report. A great hunt was going on. The sportsmen were lying in wait all round the moor, and some were even sitting up in the branches of the trees, which spread far over the reeds. The blue smoke rose up like clouds among the dark trees, and was wafted far away across the water; and the hunting dogs came—splash, splash!—into the swamp, and the rushes and the reeds bent

down on every side. That was a fright for the poor Duckling! It turned its head, and put it under its wing; but at that moment a frightful great dog stood close by the Duckling. His tongue hung far out of his mouth, and his eyes gleamed horrible and ugly; he thrust out his nose close against the Duckling, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash, splash!—on he went, without seizing it.

“O, Heaven be thanked!” sighed the Duckling. “I am so ugly, that even the dog does not like to bite me!”

And so it lay quite quiet, while the shots rattled through the reeds and gun after gun was fired. At last, late in the day, all was still; but the poor Duckling did not dare to rise up; it waited several hours before it looked round, and then hastened away out of the moor as fast as it could. It ran on over field and meadow; there was such a storm raging that it was difficult to get from one place to another.

Towards evening the Duckling came to a little miserable peasant’s hut. This hut was so dilapidated that it did not itself know on which side it should fall; and that’s why it remained standing. The storm whistled round the Duckling in such a way that the poor creature was obliged to sit down, to stand against it; and the wind blew worse and worse. Then the Duckling noticed that one of the hinges of the door had given way, and the door hung so slanting that the Duckling could slip through the crack into the room; and that is what it did.

Here lived a woman, with her Cat and her Hen. And the Cat, whom she called Sonnie, could arch his back and purr, he could even give out sparks; but for that one had to stroke his fur the wrong way. The Hen had quite little short legs, and therefore she was called Chickabiddy Shortshanks; she laid good eggs, and the woman loved her as her own child.

In the morning the strange Duckling was at once noticed, and the Cat began to purr and the Hen to cluck.

“What’s this?” said the woman, and looked all round; but she could not see well, and therefore she thought the Duckling was a fat duck that had strayed. “This is a rare prize!” she said. “Now I shall have duck’s eggs. I hope it is not a drake. We must try that.”

And so the Duckling was admitted on trial for three weeks; but no eggs came. And the Cat was master of the house, and the Hen was the lady, and always said “We and the world!” for she thought they were half the world, and by far the better half. The Duckling thought one might have a different opinion, but the Hen would not allow it.

“Can you lay eggs?” she asked.

“No.”

“Then will you hold your tongue!”

And the Cat said, "Can you curve your back, and purr, and give out sparks?"

"No."

"Then you will please have no opinion of your own when sensible folks are speaking."

And the Duckling sat in a corner and was melancholy; then the fresh air and the sunshine streamed in; and it was seized with such a strange longing to swim on the water, that it could not help telling the Hen of it.

"What are you thinking of?" cried the Hen. "You have nothing to do, that's why you have these fancies. Lay eggs, or purr, and they will pass over."

"But it is so charming to swim on the water!" said the Duckling, "so refreshing to let it close above one's head, and to dive down to the bottom."

"Yes, that must be a mighty pleasure, truly," quoth the Hen. "I fancy you must have gone crazy. Ask the Cat about it—he's the cleverest animal I know—ask him if he likes to swim on the water, or to dive down: I won't speak about myself. Ask our mistress, the old woman; no one in the world is cleverer than she. Do you think she has any desire to swim, and to let the water close above her head?"

"You don't understand me," said the Duckling.

"We don't understand you? Then pray who is to understand you? You surely don't pretend to be cleverer than the Cat and the woman—I won't say anything of myself. Don't be conceited, child, and thank your Maker for all the kindness you have received. Did you not get into a warm room, and have you not fallen into company from which you may learn something? But you are a chatterer, and it is not pleasant to associate with you. You may believe me, I speak for your good. I tell you disagreeable things, and by that one may always know one's true friends! Only take care that you learn to lay eggs, or to purr, and give out sparks!"

"I think I will go out into the wide world," said the Duckling.

"Yes, do go," replied the Hen.

And so the Duckling went away. It swam on the water, and dived, but it was slighted by every creature because of its ugliness.

Now came the autumn. The leaves in the forest turned yellow and brown; the wind caught them so that they danced about, and up in the air it was very cold. The clouds hung low, heavy with hail and snow-flakes, and on the fence stood the raven, crying, "Croak! croak!" for mere cold; yes, it was enough to make one feel cold to think of this. The poor little Duckling certainly had not a good time. One evening—the sun was just setting in his beauty—there came a whole flock of

great, handsome birds out of the bushes; they were dazzlingly white, with long, flexible necks; they were swans. They uttered a very peculiar cry, spread forth their glorious great wings, and flew away from that cold region to warmer lands, to fair open lakes. They mounted so high, so high! and the ugly Duckling felt quite strangely as it watched them. It turned round and round in the water like a wheel, stretched out its neck towards them, and uttered such a strange, loud cry as frightened itself. O! it could not forget those beautiful, happy birds; and so soon as it could see them no longer, it dived down to the very bottom, and when it came up again, it was quite beside itself. It knew not the name of those birds, and knew not whither they were flying; but it loved them more than it had ever loved any one. It was not at all envious of them. How could it think of wishing to possess such loveliness as they had? It would have been glad if only the ducks would have endured its company—the poor, ugly creature!

And the winter grew cold, very cold! The Duckling was forced to swim about in the water, to prevent the surface from freezing entirely; but every night the hole in which it swam about became smaller and smaller. It froze so hard that the icy covering crackled again; and the Duckling was obliged to use its legs continually to prevent the hole from freezing up. At last it became exhausted, and lay quite still, and thus froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, and when he saw what had happened, he took his wooden shoe, broke the ice-crust to pieces, and carried the Duckling home to his wife. Then it came to itself again. The children wanted to play with it; but the Duckling thought they wanted to hurt it, and in its terror fluttered up into the milk pan, so that the milk spurted down into the room. The woman clasped her hands, at which the Duckling flew down into the butter tub, and then into the meal barrel and out again. How it looked then! The woman screamed, and struck at it with the fire tongs; the children tumbled over one another in their efforts to catch the Duckling; and they laughed and they screamed!—well it was that the door stood open, and the poor creature was able to slip out between the shrubs into the newly-fallen snow—there it lay quite exhausted.

But it would be too melancholy if I were to tell all the misery and care which the Duckling had to endure in the hard winter. It lay out on the moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine again and the larks to sing: it was a beautiful spring.

Then all at once the Duckling could flap its wings: they beat the air more strongly than before, and bore it strongly away, and before it well knew how all this happened, it found itself in a great garden, where the elder trees smelled sweet, and bent their long green branches

down to the canal that wound through the region. O, here it was so beautiful, such a gladness of spring! and from the thicket came three glorious white swans; they rustled their wings, and swam lightly on the water. The Duckling knew the splendid creatures, and felt oppressed by a peculiar sadness.

"I will fly away to them, to the royal birds! and they will beat me, because I, that am so ugly, dare to come near them. But it is all the same. Better to be killed by *them* than to be pursued by ducks, and beaten by fowls, and pushed about by the girl who takes care of the poultry yard, and to suffer hunger in winter!" And it flew out into the water, and swam towards the beautiful swans: these looked at it, and came sailing down upon it with outspread wings. "Kill me!" said the poor creature, and bent its head down upon the water, expecting nothing but death. But what was this that it saw in the clear water? It beheld its own image; and, lo! it was no longer a clumsy dark-gray bird, ugly and hateful to look at, but a—swan!

It matters nothing if one is born in a duck yard, if one has only lain in a swan's egg.

It felt quite glad at all the need and misfortune it had suffered, now it realized its happiness in all the splendor that surrounded it. And the great swans swam round it, and stroked it with their beaks.

Into the garden came little children, who threw bread and corn into the water; and the youngest cried, "There is a new one!" and the other children shouted joyously, "Yes, a new one has arrived!" And they clapped their hands and danced about, and ran to their father and mother; and bread and cake were thrown into the water; and they all said, "The new one is the most beautiful of all! so young and handsome!" and the old swans bowed their heads before him.

Then he felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings, for he did not know what to do; he was so happy, and yet not at all proud. He thought how he had been persecuted and despised; and now he heard them saying that he was the most beautiful of all birds. Even the elder tree bent its branches straight down into the water before him, and the sun shone warm and mild. Then his wings rustled, he lifted his slender neck, and cried rejoicingly from the depths of his heart—

"I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was the Ugly Duckling!"

THE GOBLIN AT THE GROCER'S

THERE WAS once a Student—a proper Student; he lived in an attic, and owned just nothing at all. There was also a Grocer—a proper Grocer; he lived in a comfortable room, and owned the whole house. So the Goblin clung to the Grocer, for the Grocer could give him, every Christmas Eve, a bowl of grits, with such a great lump of butter in it! The Student could not afford him that; so the Goblin dwelt in the shop, and was right comfortable there.

One evening the Student came by the back door into the shop to buy candles and cheese; he had no servant to send, and so he came himself. They gave him what he wanted, he paid the money, and the Grocer, and Madam, his wife—she was a woman! she had uncommon gifts of speech!—both nodded “Good evening” to him. The Student nodded in return, and was turning away, when his eye fell upon something that was printed on the paper in which his cheese was wrapped, and he stood still to read it. It was a leaf torn out of an old book, a book that ought never to have been torn up, a book full of rare old poetry.

“Plenty more, if you like it,” quoth the Grocer; “I gave an old woman some coffee beans for it; you shall have the whole for eight skillings.”*

“Thank you,” said the Student, “let me have it instead of the cheese. I can very well sup off bread and butter, and it would be a sin and a shame for such a book as this to be torn up into scraps. You are an excellent man, a practical man, but as for poetry, you have no more taste for it than that tub!”

Now this speech sounded somewhat rudely, but it was spoken in jest; the Student laughed, and the Grocer laughed too. But the Goblin felt extremely vexed that such a speech should be made to a Grocer who was a householder and sold the best butter.

So when night was come, the shop shut up, and all, except the Student, were gone to bed, the Goblin stole away Madam's tongue—she did not want it while she slept. And now whatever object he put it upon not only received forthwith the faculty of speech, but was able to express its thoughts and feelings to the full as well as Madam herself. Fortunately the tongue could be in only one place at a time, otherwise there would have been a rare tumult and chattering in the shop, all speaking at once.

And the Goblin put the tongue on the tub wherein all the old news-

* A skilling is a small Danish coin, in value a little less than a cent.

papers lay. "Is it really true," he asked, "that you do not know what poetry is?"

"Don't I know!" replied the Tub; "it is something that is put into the newspapers to fill them up. I should think I have more of it in me than the Student has, though I am only a Tub at the Grocer's!"

And the Goblin put the tongue on the coffee mill—O, how bravely it worked then!—and he put it on the money box and on sundry other articles; and he asked them all the same question, and all gave much the same answer; all were of the same opinion, and the opinion of the multitude must be respected.

"Now for the Student!" and the Goblin glided very softly up the back stairs leading to the Student's attic. There was light within, and the Goblin peeped through the keyhole to see what the Student was doing. He was reading in his new-found treasure, the torn old book. But O how glorious! A bright sunbeam, as it were, shot out from the book, expanding itself into a mighty, broad-stemmed tree, which raised itself on high and spread its branches over the Student. Every leaf on the tree was fresh and green, every flower was like a graceful, girlish head—the faces of some lit up with eyes dark, thrilling, and passionate, and others animated by serene blue orbs, gentle as an angel's. And every fruit was like a glittering star, and such delicious melody was wafted around!

No, such glory and beauty as this never could the little Goblin have imagined. And, mounted on tiptoe, he stood peeping and peeping, till at last the bright light within died away, till the Student blew out his lamp and went to bed. Nor even then could little Goblin tear himself away, for soft, sweet music still floated around, lulling the Student to rest.

"This is beyond compare!" exclaimed the little Goblin; "this could I never have anticipated! I believe I will stay with the Student henceforth." But he paused, and reflected, and reasoned coolly with himself, and then he sighed, "The Student has no grits to give me." So down he went; yes, back he went to the Grocer's; and it was well that he did, for the Tub had, meantime, nearly worn out Madam's tongue, by giving out through one ring all that was rumbling within it, and was just on the point of turning in order to give out the same through the other ring when the Goblin came and took the tongue back to Madam. But from that time forward, the whole shop, from the cash box down to the pinewood fagots, formed their opinion from that of the Tub; and they all had such confidence in it, and treated it with so much respect, that when the Grocer read aloud in the evening the art and stage criticism from the *Times*, they all thought it was the Tub's doings.

But the little Goblin was no longer content to stay quietly in the

shop, listening to all the wit and wisdom to be gathered there; no, as soon as ever the lamp gleamed from the attic-chamber he was gone; that slight thread of lamplight issuing from under the Student's door acted upon him as it were a strong anchor rope drawing him upward; he must away to peep through the keyhole. And then he felt a tumult of pleasure within him, a feeling such as we all have known while gazing on the glorious sea when the Angel of the Storm is passing over it; and then he would burst out weeping, he knew not why, but they were happy, blessed tears. O, delightful beyond conception would it have been to sit with the Student under the tree! but that would be too much happiness; content was he and right glad of the keyhole. And there he would stand for hours in the draughty passage, with the bleak autumn wind blowing down from the trap-door in the roof full upon him; but the enthusiastic little spirit never heeded the cold, nor, indeed, felt it at all until the light in the attic had been extinguished, and the sweet music had died away in the mournful night wind. Ugh! then he did shake and shiver, and crept back into his comfortable warm corner. And when Christmas Eve came, and the great lump of butter in his grits—ah! then he felt that the Grocer was his master, after all!

But one midnight the Goblin was awaked by a terrible rat-tat upon the window shutters; a crowd of people outside were shouting with all their might and main; the watchman was sounding his alarm; the whole street was lit up with a blaze of flame. Fire! where was it? at the Grocer's, or next door? The tumult was beyond description. Madam, in her bewilderment, took her gold earrings off her ears and put them in her pocket, by way of saving something; the Grocer was in a state of excitement about his bonds, the maid wild for her silk mantilla. Everyone wanted to rescue whatever he deemed most precious; so would the little Goblin. In two bounds he was upstairs, in the attic. The Student was standing at the open window, calmly admiring the fire, which was in the neighbor's house, not theirs; the marvelous book lay on the table, the little Goblin seized it, put it into his red cap, and held it aloft with both hands; the most precious thing the house possessed was saved! Away he darted with it, sprang upon the roof, and in a second was seated on the chimney pot, the glorious raging flames like a halo around him, both hands grasping firmly the little red cap wherein lay his treasure. And now he knew where his heart was, felt that the Student was really his master; but when the fire was extinguished, and he recovered his senses—what then? "I will divide my allegiance between them," quoth he; "I cannot quite give up the Grocer, because of my bowl of grits."

Now this was really quite human. The rest of us stick to the Grocer—for grits.

THE FIR TREE

OUT in the woods stood a nice little Fir Tree. The place he had was a very good one; the sun shone on him; as to fresh air, there was enough of that, and round him grew many large-sized comrades, pines as well as firs. But the little Fir wanted so very much to be a grown-up tree.

He did not think of the warm sun and of the fresh air; he did not care for the little peasant children that ran about and prattled when they were in the woods looking for wild strawberries. The children often came with a whole pitcher full of berries, or a long row of them threaded on a straw, and sat down near the young Tree and said, "O, how pretty he is! what a nice little fir!" But this was what the Tree could not bear to hear.

At the end of a year he had shot up a good deal, and after another year he was another long bit taller; for with fir trees one can always tell by the shoots how many years old they are.

"O, were I but such a high tree as the others are," sighed he. "Then I should be able to spread out my branches, and with the tops to look into the wide world! Then would the birds build nests among my branches; and when there was a breeze, I could bend with as much stateliness as the others!"

Neither the sunbeams, nor the birds, nor the red clouds which morning and evening sailed above him, gave the little Tree any pleasure.

In winter, when the snow lay glittering on the ground, a hare would often come leaping along, and jump right over the little Tree. O, that made him so angry! But two winters were past, and in the third the Tree was so large that the hare was obliged to go round it. "To grow and grow, to get older and be tall," thought the Tree, "that, after all, is the most delightful thing in the world!"

In autumn the wood-cutters always came and felled some of the largest trees. This happened every year; and the young Fir Tree, that had now grown to a very comely size, trembled at the sight; for the magnificent great trees fell to the earth with noise and cracking, the branches were lopped off, and the trees looked long and bare: they were hardly to be recognized; and then they were laid in carts, and the horses dragged them out of the wood.

Where did they go to? What became of them?

In spring, when the swallows and the storks came, the Tree asked them, "Don't you know where they have been taken? Have you not met them anywhere?"

The swallows did not know anything about it; but the Stork looked musing, nodded his head, and said, "Yes; I think I know; I met many ships as I was flying hither from Egypt; on the ships were magnificent masts, and I venture to assert that it was they that smelt so of fir. I may congratulate you, for they lifted themselves on high most majestically!"

"O, were I but old enough to fly across the sea! But how does the sea look in reality? What is it like?"

"That would take a long time to explain," said the Stork, and with these words off he went.

"Rejoice in thy growth!" said the sunbeams, "rejoice in thy vigorous growth, and in the fresh life that moveth within thee!"

And the wind kissed the Tree, and the dew wept tears over him; but the Fir understood it not.

When Christmas came, quite young trees were cut down; trees which often were not even as large or of the same age as this Fir Tree, who could never rest, but always wanted to be off. These young trees, and they were always the finest looking, retained their branches; they were laid on carts, and the horses drew them out of the wood.

"Where are they going to?" asked the Fir. "They are not taller than I; there was one indeed that was considerably shorter; and why do they retain all their branches? Whither are they taken?"

"We know! we know!" chirped the sparrows. "We have peeped in at the windows in the town below! We know whither they are taken! The greatest splendor and the greatest magnificence one can imagine await them. We peeped through the windows, and saw them planted in the middle of the warm room, and ornamented with the most splendid things—with gilded apples, with gingerbread, with toys, and many hundred lights!"

"And then?" asked the Fir Tree, trembling in every bough. "And then? What happens then?"

"We did not see anything more: it was incomparably beautiful."

"I would fain know if I am destined for so glorious a career," cried the Tree, rejoicing. "That is still better than to cross the sea! What a longing do I suffer! Were Christmas but come! I am now tall, and my branches spread like the others that were carried off last year! O, were I but already on the cart! Were I in the warm room with all the splendor and magnificence! Yes; then something better, something still grander, will surely follow, or wherefore should they thus ornament me? Something better, something still grander, *must* follow. —but what? O, how I long, how I suffer! I do not know myself what is the matter with me!"

"Rejoice in our presence!" said the air and the sunlight; "rejoice in thy own fresh youth!"

But the Tree did not rejoice at all; he grew and grew, and was green both winter and summer. People that saw him said, "What a fine tree!" and towards Christmas he was one of the first that was cut down. The axe struck deep into the very pith; the tree fell to the earth with a sigh: he felt a pang—it was like a swoon; he could not think of happiness, for he was sorrowful at being separated from his home, from the place where he had sprung up. He well knew that he should never see his dear old comrades, the little bushes and flowers around him, any more; perhaps not even the birds! The departure was not at all agreeable.

The Tree only came to himself when he was unloaded in a courtyard with the other trees, and heard a man say, "That one is splendid! we don't want the others." Then two servants came in rich livery and carried the Fir Tree into a large and splendid drawing room. Portraits were hanging on the walls, and near the white porcelain stove stood two large Chinese vases with lions on the covers. There, too, were large easy chairs, silken sofas, large tables full of picture books, and full of toys worth hundreds and hundreds of crowns—at least the children said so. And the Fir Tree was stuck upright in a cask that was filled with sand: but no one could see that it was a cask, for green cloth was hung all round it, and it stood on a large gayly colored carpet. O, how the tree quivered! What was to happen? The servants, as well as the young ladies, decorated it. On one branch there hung little nets cut out of colored paper, and each net was filled with sugarplums; and among the other boughs gilded apples and walnuts were suspended, looking as though they had grown there, and little blue and white tapers were placed among the leaves. Dolls that looked for all the world like men—the Tree had never beheld such before—were seen among the foliage, and at the very top a large star of gold tinsel was fixed. It was really splendid—splendid beyond description.

"This evening!" said they all; "how it will shine this evening!"

"O," thought the Tree, "if the evening were but here! If the tapers were but lighted! And then I wonder what will happen! Perhaps the other trees from the forest will come to look at me! Perhaps the sparrows will beat against the window panes! I wonder if I shall take root here, and winter and summer stand covered with ornaments!"

He knew very much about the matter! but he was so impatient that for sheer longing he got a pain in his back, and this with trees is the same thing as a headache with us.

The candles were now lighted. What brightness! What splendor! The Tree trembled so in every bough that one of the tapers set fire to the foliage. It blazed up splendidly.

"Help! help!" cried the young ladies, and they quickly put out the fire.

Now the Tree did not even dare tremble. What a state he was in! He was so uneasy lest he should lose something of his splendor, that he was quite bewildered amidst the glare and brightness; when suddenly both folding doors opened, and a troop of children rushed in as if they would upset the Tree. The older persons followed quietly; the little ones stood quite still. But it was only for a moment; then they shouted so that the whole place re-echoed with their rejoicing; they danced round the Tree, and one present after the other was pulled off.

"What are they about?" thought the Tree. "What is to happen now!" And the lights burned down to the very branches, and as they burned down they were put out one after the other, and then the children had permission to plunder the Tree. So they fell upon it with such violence that all its branches cracked; if it had not been fixed firmly in the cask, it would certainly have tumbled down.

The children danced about with their beautiful playthings; no one looked at the Tree except the old nurse, who peeped between the branches but it was only to see if there was a fig or an apple left that had been forgotten.

"A story! a story!" cried the children, drawing a little fat man towards the Tree. He seated himself under it, and said, "Now we are in the shade, and the Tree can listen too. But I shall tell only one story. Now which will you have; that about Ivedy-Avedy, or about Klumpy-Dumpy who tumbled downstairs, and yet after all came to the throne and married the princess?"

"Ivedy-Avedy," cried some; "Klumpy-Dumpy," cried the others. There was such a bawling and screaming!—the Fir Tree alone was silent, and he thought to himself, "Am I not to bawl with the rest?—am I to do nothing whatever?" for he was one of the company, and had done what he had to do.

And the man told about Klumpy-Dumpy that tumbled down, who notwithstanding came to the throne, and at last married the princess. And the children clapped their hands, and cried out, "O, go on! Do go on!" They wanted to hear about Ivedy-Avedy too, but the little man only told them about Klumpy-Dumpy. The Fir Tree stood quite still and absorbed in thought: the birds in the wood had never related the like of this. "Klumpy-Dumpy fell downstairs, and yet he married the princess! Yes, yes! that's the way of the world!" thought the Fir Tree, and believed it all, because the man who told the story was so good-looking. "Well, well! who knows, perhaps I may fall downstairs too, and get a princess as wife!" And he looked forward with joy to the

morrow, when he hoped to be decked out again with lights, playthings, fruits, and tinsel.

"I won't tremble tomorrow!" thought the Fir Tree. "I will enjoy to the full all my splendor! Tomorrow I shall hear again the story of Klumpy-Dumpy, and perhaps that of Ivedy-Avedy too." And the whole night the Tree stood still and in deep thought.

In the morning the servant and the housemaid came in.

"Now then the splendor will begin again," thought the Fir. But they dragged him out of the room, and up the stairs into the loft; and here in a dark corner, where no daylight could enter, they left him. "What's the meaning of this?" thought the Tree. "What am I to do here? What shall I hear now, I wonder?" And he leaned against the wall lost in reverie. Time enough had he too for his reflections; for days and nights passed on, and nobody came up; and when at last somebody did come, it was only to put some great trunks in a corner out of the way. There stood the Tree quite hidden; it seemed as if he had been entirely forgotten.

"'Tis now winter out of doors!" thought the Tree. "The earth is hard and covered with snow; men cannot plant me now, and therefore I have been put up here under shelter till the springtime comes! How thoughtful that is! How kind man is, after all! If it only were not so dark here, and so terribly lonely! Not even a hare. And out in the woods it was so pleasant, when the snow was on the ground, and the hare leaped by; yes—even when he jumped over me; but I did not like it then. It is really terribly lonely here!"

"Squeak! squeak!" said a little mouse at the same moment, peeping out of his hole. And then another little one came. They snuffed about the Fir Tree, and rustled among the branches.

"It is dreadfully cold," said the mouse. "But for that, it would be delightful here, old Fir, wouldn't it?"

"I am by no means old," said the Fir Tree. "There's many a one considerably older than I am."

"Where do you come from," asked the mice; "and what can you do?"

They were so extremely curious. "Tell us about the most beautiful spot on the earth. Have you never been there? Were you never in the larder, where cheeses lie on the shelves, and hams hang from above; where one dances about on tallow candles; that place where one enters lean, and comes out again fat and portly?"

"I know no such place," said the Tree. "But I know the wood, where the sun shines, and where the little birds sing." And then he told all about his youth; and the little mice had never heard the like before; and they listened and said—

"Well, to be sure! How much you have seen! How happy you must have been!"

"I!" said the Fir Tree, thinking over what he had himself related "Yes, in reality those were happy times." And then he told about Christmas Eve, when he was decked out with cakes and candles.

"O," said the little mice, "how fortunate you have been, old Fir Tree!"

"I am by no means old," said he. "I came from the wood this winter; I am in my prime, and am only rather short for my age."

"What delightful stories you know!" said the mice: and the next night they came with four other little mice, who were to hear what the Tree recounted; and the more he related, the more plainly he remembered all himself; and it appeared as if those times had really been happy times. "But they may still come—they may still come. Klumpy-Dumpy fell downstairs, and yet he got a princess!" and he thought at the moment of a nice little birch tree growing out in the woods: to the Fir, that would be a real charming princess.

"Who is Klumpy-Dumpy?" asked the mice. So then the Fir Tree told the whole fairy tale, for he could remember every single word of it; and the little mice jumped for joy up to the very top of the Tree. Next night two more mice came, and on Sunday two rats, even; but they said the stories were not interesting, which vexed the little mice; and they, too, now began to think them not so very amusing either.

"Do you know only one story?" asked the rats.

"Only that one," answered the Tree. "I heard it on my happiest evening; but I did not then know how happy I was."

"It is a very stupid story! Don't you know one about bacon and tallow candles? Can't you tell any larger stories?"

"No," said the Tree.

"Then good-by," said the rats; and they went home.

At last the little mice stayed away also; and the Tree sighed: "After all, it was very pleasant when the sleek little mice sat round me and listened to what I told them. Now that too is over. But I will take good care to enjoy myself when I am brought out again."

But when was that to be? Why, one morning there came a quantity of people and set to work in the loft. The trunks were moved, the tree was pulled out and thrown—rather hard, it is true—down on the floor, but a man drew him towards the stairs, where the daylight shone.

"Now a merry life will begin again," thought the Tree. He felt the fresh air, the first sunbeam—and now he was out in the courtyard. All passed so quickly, there was so much going on around him, that the Tree quite forgot to look to himself. The court adjoined a garden, and

all was in flower; the roses hung so fresh and odorous over the balustrade, the lindens were in blossom, the swallows flew by, and said "Quirre-vit! my husband is come!" but it was not the Fir Tree that they meant.

"Now, then, I shall really enjoy life," said he, exultingly, and spread out his branches; but, alas! they were all withered and yellow. It was in a corner that he lay, among weeds and nettles. The golden star of tinsel was still on the top of the Tree, and glittered in the sunshine.

In the courtyard some of the merry children were playing who had danced at Christmas round the Fir Tree, and were so glad at the sight of him. One of the youngest ran and tore off the golden star.

"Only look what is still on the ugly old Christmas tree!" said he, trampling on the branches, so that they all cracked beneath his feet.

And the Tree beheld all the beauty of the flowers, and the freshness in the garden; he beheld himself, and wished he had remained in his dark corner in the loft: he thought of his first youth in the wood, of the merry Christmas Eve, and of the little mice who had listened with so much pleasure to the story of Klumpy-Dumpy.

"It's over—it's past!" said the poor Tree. "Had I but rejoiced when I had reason to do so! But now it's past, it's past!"

And the gardener's boy chopped the Tree into small pieces; there was a whole heap lying there. The wood flamed up splendidly under the large brewing copper, and it sighed so deeply! Each sigh was like a shot.

The boys played about in the court, and the youngest wore the gold star on his breast which the Tree had had on the happiest evening of his life. However, that was over now—the Tree gone, the story at an end.

THE PIGGY BANK

IN THE nursery a number of toys lay strewn about; high up, on the wardrobe, stood the money box, made of clay in the shape of a little pig; the pig had by nature a chink in its back, and this chink had been so enlarged with a knife that whole dollar pieces could slip through; and, indeed, two such had slipped into the box, beside a number of pennies. The piggy bank was stuffed so full that it could no longer rattle, and that is the highest point of perfection a piggy bank can attain. There it stood upon the cupboard, high and lofty, looking down upon everything else in the room. It knew very well that what

it had in its stomach would have bought all the toys, and that's what we call having self-respect.

The others thought of that too, even if they did not say it, for there were many other things to speak of. One of the drawers was half pulled out, and there lay a great handsome doll, though she was somewhat old and her neck had been mended. She looked out and said—

"Now we'll play at men and women, for that is always something!"

And now there was a general uproar, and even the framed prints on the walls turned round and showed that there was a wrong side to them; but that was not because they objected.

It was late at night; the moon shone through the window-frames and afforded the cheapest light. The game was now to begin, and all, even the children's go-cart, which certainly belonged to the coarser play-things, were invited to take part in the sport.

"Each one has his own peculiar value," said the go-cart; "we cannot all be noblemen. There must be some who do the work, as the saying is."

The piggy bank was the only one who received a written invitation, for he was of high standing, and they were afraid he would not accept a verbal message. Indeed, he did not answer to say whether he would come, nor did he come: if he was to take a part, he must enjoy the sport from his own home; they were to arrange accordingly, and so they did.

The little toy theatre was now put up in such a way that the piggy bank could look directly in. They wanted to begin with a comedy, and afterwards there was to be a tea party and a discussion for mental improvement, and with this latter part they began immediately. The rocking horse spoke of training and race, the go-cart of railways and steam power, for all this belonged to their profession, and it was quite right they should talk of it. The clock talked politics—tick—tick—and knew what was the time of day, though it was whispered he did not go correctly; the bamboo cane stood there, stiff and proud, for he was conceited about his brass ferule and his silver top, for being thus bound above and below; and on the sofa lay two worked cushions, pretty and stupid. And now the play began.

All sat and looked on, and it was requested that the audience should applaud and crack and stamp according as they were gratified. But the riding whip said he never cracked for old people, only for young ones who were not yet married.

"I crack for everything," said the cracker.

"There will be one good place at any rate," thought he sawdust box, and that was what each one in the comedy was thinking.

The piece was worthless, but it was well played; all the characters turned their painted side to the audience, for they were so made that

they should only be looked at from that side, and not from the other; and all played wonderfully well, coming out quite beyond the lamps, because the wires were a little too long, but that only made them come out the more. The darned doll was quite exhausted with excitement—so thoroughly exhausted that she burst at the darned place in her neck; and the piggy bank was so enchanted in his way that he formed the resolution to do something for one of the players, and to remember him in his will as the one who should be buried with him in the family vault, when matters were so far advanced.

It was true enjoyment, such true enjoyment that they quite gave up the thoughts of tea, and only carried out the idea of an exercise of wits. That's what they called playing at men and women; and there was nothing wrong in it, for they were only playing; and each one thought of himself and of what the piggy bank might think; and the piggy bank thought farthest of all, for he thought of making his will and of his burial. And when might this come to pass? Certainly far sooner than was expected. Crack! it fell down from the cupboard—fell on the ground, and was broken to pieces; and the pennies hopped and danced in comical style: the little ones turned round like tops, and the bigger ones rolled away, particularly the one great silver dollar who wanted to go out into the world. And he came out into the world, and so did they all. And the pieces of the piggy bank were put into the dustbin; but the next day a new piggy bank was standing on the cupboard: it had not yet a farthing in its stomach, and therefore it could not rattle, and in this it was like the other. And that was a beginning—and with that we will make an end.

THE SWINEHERD

THERE WAS once a poor prince who had only a tiny kingdom, but it was big enough to allow him to marry, and he was bent upon marrying.

Now it certainly was rather bold of him to say to the Emperor's daughter, "Will you have me?" He did, however, venture to say so, for his name was known far and wide. And there were hundreds of princesses who would have said "Yes," and "Thank you, kindly," but see if *she* would!

Let us hear about it.

A rose tree grew on the grave of the Prince's father. It was such a beautiful rose tree. But it bloomed only every fifth year, and then bore

only one blossom. What a rose that was! By merely smelling it one forgot all of one's cares and sorrows.

Then he had a nightingale which sang as if every lovely melody in the world dwelt in her little throat. This rose and this nightingale were to be given to the Princess, so they were put into great silver caskets and sent to her.

The Emperor had them carried before him into the great hall where the Princess was playing at "visiting" with her ladies-in-waiting—they had nothing else to do. When she saw the caskets with the gifts, she clapped her hands with delight.

"If it were only a little pussy cat!" said she. But there was the lovely rose.

"Oh, how exquisitely it is made!" said all the ladies-in-waiting.

"It is more than beautiful," said the Emperor. "It is neatly made." But the Princess touched it, and then she was ready to cry.

"Fie, papa!" she said. "It is not made. It is a real one."

"Fie," said all the ladies-in-waiting. "It is a real one."

"Well, let us see what there is in the other casket, before we get angry," said the Emperor, and out came the nightingale. It sang so beautifully that at first no one could find anything to say against it.

"*Superbe! charmant!*" said the ladies-in-waiting, for they all had a smattering of French; one spoke it worse than the other.

"How that bird reminds me of our lamented Empress' musical box," said an old courtier. "Ah yes, they are the same tunes and the same beautiful execution."

"So they are," said the Emperor, crying like a little child.

"I should hardly think it could be a real one," said the Princess.

"Yes, it is a real one," said those who had brought it.

"Oh, let that bird fly away then," said the Princess, and she would not hear of allowing the Prince to come. But he was not to be crushed. He stained his face brown and black and, pressing his cap over his eyes, he knocked at the door.

"Good morning, Emperor," said he. "Can I be taken into service in the palace?"

"Well, there are so many wishing to do that," said the Emperor. "But let me see. Yes, I need somebody to look after the pigs. We have so many of them."

So the Prince was made imperial swineherd. A horrid little room was given him near the pigsties, and here he had to live. He sat busily at work all day, and by the evening he had made a beautiful little cooking pot. It had bells all round it, and when the pot boiled, they tinkled delightfully and played the old tune:

*"Ach du lieber Augustin,
Alles ist weg, weg, weg!" **

But the greatest of all its charms was that by holding one's finger in the steam, one could immediately smell all the dinners that were being cooked at every stove in the town. Now this was a very different matter from a rose.

The Princess came walking along with all her ladies-in-waiting, and when she heard the tune she stopped and looked pleased, for she could play "Ach du lieber Augustin" herself. It was her only tune, and she could only play it with one finger.

"Why, that is my tune," she said. "This must be a cultivated swineherd. Ask him what the instrument costs."

So one of the ladies-in-waiting had to go into his room, but before she entered she put on wooden clog-shoes.

"How much do you want for the pot?" she asked.

"I must have ten kisses from the Princess," said the swineherd.

"Heaven preserve us!" said the lady.

"I won't take less," said the swineherd.

"Well, what does he say?" asked the Princess.

"I really cannot tell you," said the lady-in-waiting. "It is so shocking."

"Then you must whisper it." And she whispered it.

"He is a wretch!" said the Princess and went away at once. But she had only gone a little way when she heard the bells tinkling beautifully:

"Ach du lieber Augustin."

"Go and ask him if he will take ten kisses from the ladies-in-waiting."

"No, thank you," said the swineherd. "Ten kisses from the Princess, or I keep my pot."

"How tiresome it is," said the Princess. "Then you will have to stand round me, so that no one may see."

So the ladies-in-waiting stood round her and spread out their skirts while the swineherd took his ten kisses, and then the pot was hers.

What a delight it was to them! The pot was kept on the boil day and night. They knew what was cooking on every stove in the town, from the chamberlain's to the shoemaker's. The ladies-in-waiting danced about and clapped their hands.

"We know who has sweet soup and pancakes for dinner, and who has cutlets. How amusing it is."

* Alas, dear Augustin,
All is lost, lost, lost!

"Highly interesting," said the mistress of the robes.

"Yes, but hold your tongues, for I am the Emperor's daughter."

"Heaven preserve us!" they all said.

The swineherd—that is to say, the Prince, only nobody knew that he was not a real swineherd—did not let the day pass in idleness, and he now constructed a rattle. When it was swung round it played all the waltzes, galops and jig tunes ever heard since the creation of the world.

"But this is *superbe!*" said the Princess, as she walked by. "I have never heard finer compositions. Go and ask him what the instrument costs, but let us have no more kissing."

"He wants a hundred kisses from the Princess," said the lady-in-waiting.

"I think he is mad!" said the Princess, and she went away, but she had not gone far when she stopped.

"One must encourage art," she said. "I am the Emperor's daughter. Tell him he can have ten kisses, the same as yesterday, and he can take the others from the ladies-in-waiting."

"But we don't like that at all," said the ladies.

"Oh, nonsense! If I can kiss him you can do the same. Remember that I pay you wages as well as give you board and lodging." So the lady-in-waiting had to go again.

"A hundred kisses from the Princess, or let each keep his own."

"Stand in front of me," said she, and all the ladies stood round while he kissed her.

"Whatever is the meaning of that crowd round the pigsties?" said the Emperor as he stepped out on to the veranda. He rubbed his eyes and put on his spectacles. "Why, it is the ladies-in-waiting. What game are they up to? I must go and see!" So he pulled up the heels of his slippers for they were shoes which he had trodden down.

Bless us, what a hurry he was in! When he got into the yard he walked very softly, and the ladies were so busy counting the kisses, so that there should be fair play, and neither too few nor too many kisses, that they never heard the Emperor. He stood on tiptoe.

"What is all this?" he said when he saw what was going on, and he hit them on the head with his slipper just as the swineherd was taking his eighty-sixth kiss.

"Out you go!" said the Emperor. He was very furious, and he put both the Princess and the Prince out of his realm.

There she stood crying, and the swineherd scolded, and the rain poured down in torrents.

"Oh, miserable creature that I am!" said the Princess. "If only I had accepted the handsome Prince. Oh, how unhappy I am!"

The swineherd went behind a tree, wiped the black and brown stain

from his face, and threw away his ugly clothes. When he stepped out dressed as a prince, he was so handsome that the Princess could not help curtsying to him.

"I am come to despise thee," he said. "Thou wouldst not have an honorable prince. Thou couldst not prize the rose or the nightingale. But thou wouldst kiss the swineherd for a trumpery musical box! As thou hast made thy bed, so must thou lie upon it."

Then he went back into his own little kingdom and shut and locked the door. So she had to stand outside and sing in earnest:

*"Ack du lieber Augustin,
Alles ist weg, weg, weg!"*

HANS CLODHOPPER

THERE WAS once an old mansion in the country in which lived an old squire with his two sons, and these two sons were too clever by half. They had made up their minds to propose to the King's daughter. And they ventured to do so because she had made it known that she would take any man for a husband who had most to say for himself.

These two took a week over their preparations. It was all the time they had for it, but it was quite enough with all their accomplishments, which were most useful. One of them knew the Latin dictionary by heart, as well as the town newspapers for three years, either forwards or backwards. The second one had made himself acquainted with all the statutes of the Corporations and what every alderman had to know, so he thought he was competent to talk about affairs of state. And he also knew how to embroider harness, for he was clever with his fingers.

"I shall win the King's daughter," they both said, and their father gave each of them a beautiful horse. The one who could repeat the dictionary and the newspapers had a coal-black horse, while the one who was learned in guilds and embroideries had a milk-white one. Then they smeared the corners of their mouths with oil to make them more flexible. All the servants were assembled in the courtyards to see them mount, but just then the third brother came up—for there were three. Only nobody made any account of this one, Hans Clodhopper, as he had no accomplishments like his brothers.

"Where are you going in your fine clothes?" he asked.

"To court, to talk ourselves into favor with the Princess. Haven't you heard the news which is being drummed all over the country?" And then they told him the news.

"Preserve us! Then I must go too," said Hans Clodhopper. But his brothers laughed and rode away.

"Father, give me a horse. I want to get married too. If she takes me she takes me, and if she doesn't take me, I shall take her all the same."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said his father. "I will give no horse to you. Why, you have got nothing to say for yourself, but your brothers are fine fellows."

"If I mayn't have a horse," said Hans Clodhopper, "I'll take the billy goat. He is my own and he can carry me very well!" And he seated himself astride the billy goat, dug his heels into its sides, and galloped off down the highroad. Whew! what a pace they went at.

"Here I come," shouted Hans Clodhopper, and he sang till the air rang.

The brothers rode on in silence. They did not say a word to each other, for they had to store up every good idea which they wanted to produce later on, and their speeches had to be very carefully thought out.

"Hallo!" shouted Hans Clodhopper. "Here I come. See what I've found on the road!" And he showed them a dead crow.

"What on earth will you do with that, Clodhopper?" said they.

"I will give it to the King's daughter."

"Yes, I would do that," said they, and they rode on laughing.

"Hallo, here I come! See what I have found! One doesn't find such a thing as this every day on the road." The brothers turned round to see what it was.

"Clodhopper," said they, "it's nothing but an old wooden shoe with the upper part broken off. Is the Princess to have that too?"

"Yes indeed she is," said Hans, and the brothers again rode on laughing.

"Hallo, hallo, here I am!" shouted Hans Clodhopper. "Now this is something wonderful!"

"What have you found this time?" asked the brothers.

"Won't the Princess be delighted!"

"Why," said the brothers, "it's only sand picked up out of the ditch!"

"Yes, that it is," said Hans Clodhopper, "and the finest kind of sand, too. You can hardly hold it." And he filled his pockets with it. His brothers rode on as fast as they could, and arrived at the town gates a whole hour before him. At the gate the suitors received tickets in the order of their arrival, and they were arranged in rows, six in each file and so close together that they could not move their arms. This was a very good thing, or they would have torn each other's garments off, merely because one stood in front of the other. All the other inhabitants of

the town stood round the castle, peeping in at the windows to see the King's daughter receive the suitors. And as each one of them came into the room he lost the power of speech.

"No good," said the Princess. "Away with him!"

Now came the brother who could repeat the dictionary, but he had entirely forgotten it while standing in the ranks. The floor creaked and the ceiling was made of looking glass, so that he saw himself standing on his head. And at every window sat three clerks and an alderman, who wrote down all that was said, so that it might be sent to the papers at once and sold for a halfpenny at the street corners. It was terrible, and the stoves had been heated to such a degree that they got red-hot at the top.

"It is terribly hot in here," said the suitor.

"That is because my father is roasting cockerels today," said the Princess.

Bah! There he stood like a fool. He had not expected a conversation of this kind, and he could not think of a word to say, just when he wanted to be specially witty.

"No good," said the King's daughter. "Away with him!" And he had to go.

Then came the second brother. "There's a fearful heat here," said he.

"Yes, we are roasting cockerels today," said the King's daughter.

"What did—what?" said he. And all the reporters duly wrote, "What did—what."

"No good," said the King's daughter. "Away with him!"

Then came Hans Clodhopper. He rode the billy goat right into the room.

"What a burning heat you have here," said he.

"That is because I am roasting cockerels," said the King's daughter.

"That is very convenient," said Hans Clodhopper. "Then I suppose I can get a crow roasted too."

"Yes, very well," said the King's daughter. "But have you anything to roast it in? I have neither pot nor pan."

"But I have," said Hans Clodhopper. "Here is a cooking pot." And he brought out the wooden shoe and put the crow into it.

"Why you have enough for a whole meal," said the King's daughter. "But where shall we get any dripping to baste it with?"

"Oh, I have some in my pocket," said Hans Clodhopper. "I have enough and to spare." And he poured a little of the sand out of his pocket.

"Now I like that," said the Princess. "You have an answer for every-

thing, and you have something to say for yourself. I will have you for a husband. But do you know that every word we have said will be in the paper tomorrow? For at every window sit three clerks and an alderman, and the alderman is the worst, for he doesn't understand." She said this to frighten him. All the clerks sniggered and made blots of ink on the floor.

"Oh, those are the gentry!" said Hans Clodhopper. "Then I must give the alderman the best thing I have." And he turned out his pockets and threw the sand in his face.

"That was cleverly done," said the Princess. "I couldn't have done it, but I will try to learn."

So Hans Clodhopper became King, gained a wife and a crown, and sat upon the throne. We have this straight out of the alderman's newspaper, but it is not to be depended upon.

THE LOVE AFFAIR OF THE TOP AND THE BALL

A TOP and a little Ball were together in a drawer among some other toys; and the Top said to the Ball—

"Shall we not be lovers, as we live together in the same box?"

But the Ball, which had a coat of morocco leather, and was just as conceited as any fine lady, would make no answer to such a proposal. The next day came the little boy to whom the toys belonged: he painted the Top red and yellow, and hammered a brass nail into it; and it looked splendid when the Top turned round.

"Look at me!" he cried to the little Ball. "What do you say now? Shall we not be engaged to each other? We suit one another so well! You jump and I dance! No one could be happier than we two should be."

"Indeed! Do you think so?" replied the little Ball. "Perhaps you do not know that my papa and my mamma were morocco slippers, and that I have a Spanish cork inside me?"

"Yes, but I am made of mahogany," said the Top; "and the mayor himself turned me. He has a turning lathe of his own, and it amuses him greatly."

"Can I depend on that?" asked the little Ball.

"May I never be whipped again if it is not true!" replied the Top.

"You can speak well for yourself," observed the Ball, "but I cannot grant your request. I am as good as engaged to a swallow: every time

I leap up into the air he puts his head out of the nest and says, 'Will you?' And now I have silently said 'Yes,' and that is as good as half engaged; but I promise I will never forget you."

"Yes, that will be much good!" said the Top.

And they spoke no more to each other.

Next day the Ball was taken out by the boy. The Top saw how she flew high into the air, like a bird; at last one could no longer see her. Each time she came back again, but gave a high leap when she touched the earth, and that was done either from her longing to mount up again, or because she had a Spanish cork in her body. But the ninth time the little Ball remained absent, and did not come back again; and the boy sought and sought, but she was gone.

"I know very well where she is!" sighed the Top. "She is in the Swallow's nest, and has married the Swallow!"

The more the Top thought of this, the more it longed for the Ball. Just because it could not get the Ball, its love increased; and the fact that the Ball had chosen another formed a peculiar feature in the case. So the Top danced round and hummed, but always thought of the little Ball, which became more and more beautiful in his fancy. Thus several years went by, and now it was an old love.

And the Top was no longer young! But one day he was gilt all over; never had he looked so handsome; he was now a golden Top, and sprang till he hummed again. Yes, that was something worth seeing! But all at once he sprang too high, and—he was gone!

They looked and looked, even in the cellar, but he was not to be found. Where could he be?

He had jumped into the dust box, where all kinds of things were lying: cabbage stalks, sweepings, and dust that had fallen down from the roof.

"Here's a nice place to lie in! The gilding will soon leave me here. Among what a rabble have I alighted!"

And then he looked sideways at a long leafless cabbage stump, and at a curious round thing like an old apple; but it was not an apple—it was an old Ball, which had lain for years in the roof gutter and was quite saturated with water.

"Thank goodness, here comes one of us, with whom one can talk!" said the little Ball, and looked at the gilt Top. "I am really morocco, worked by maidens' hands, and have a Spanish cork within me; but no one would think it, to look at me. I was very near marrying a swallow, but I fell into the gutter on the roof, and have lain there full five years, and become quite wet through. You may believe me, that's a long time for a young girl."

But the Top said nothing. He thought of his old love; and the more

he heard, the clearer it became to him that this was she. Then came the servant girl, and wanted to turn out the dust box. "Aha! there's a gilt top!" she cried. And so the Top was brought again to notice and honor, but nothing was heard of the little Ball. And the Top spoke no more of his old love; for that dies away when the beloved object has lain for five years in a roof gutter and got wet through; yes, one does not know her again when one meets her in the dust box.

THE SWIFTEST RUNNERS

THERE WAS a prize offered—or rather two prizes, a large and a small one—for the greatest speed, not in a single race, but to such as had raced the whole year.

"I took the first prize," said the Hare. "One had a right to expect justice when one's own family and best friends were in the council; but that the Swail should have got the second prize I consider as almost an insult to me."

"No," observed the fence rail, who had been a witness to the distribution of the prizes; "you must take diligence and good will into consideration. That remark was made by several very estimable persons, and that was also my opinion. The Snail, to be sure, took half a year to cross the threshold; but he broke his thighbone in the haste he made. He devoted himself entirely to this race; and, moreover, he ran with his house on his back. All these weighed in his favor, and so he took the second prize."

"I think my claims might also have been taken into consideration," said the Swallow. "More speedy than I, in flight and motion, I believe no one has shown himself. And where have I not been? Far, far away!"

"And that is just your misfortune," said the fence rail. "You gad about too much. You are always on the wing, ready to start out of the country when it begins to freeze. You have no love for your fatherland. You cannot claim any consideration in it."

"But if I were to sleep all the winter through on the moor," inquired the Swallow—"sleep my whole time away—should I be thus entitled to be taken into consideration?"

"Obtain an affidavit from the old woman of the moor that you did sleep half a year in your fatherland, then your claims will be taken into consideration."

"I deserved the first prize instead of the second," said the Snail. "I know very well that the Hare only ran from cowardice, whenever he

thought there was danger near. I, on the contrary, made the trial the business of my life, and I have become a cripple in consequence of my exertions. If anyone had a right to the first prize it was I; but I make no fuss; I scorn to do so." And then he spat.

"I can declare upon my honor that each prize, at least as far as my voice in the matter went, was accorded with strict justice," said the old signpost in the wood, who had been one of the arbitrators. "I always act from order, reflection, and calculation. Seven times before have I had the honor to be engaged in the distribution of the prizes, but never until today have I had my own way carried out. My plan has always hitherto been thwarted—that was, to give the first prize to one of the first letters in the alphabet, and the second prize to one of the last letters. If you will be so good as to grant me your attention, I will explain it to you. The eighth letter in the alphabet from *A* is *H*—that stands for *Hare*, and therefore I awarded the greatest prize to the hare; and the eighth letter from the end is *S*, therefore the *Snail* obtained the second prize. Next time the *I* will carry off the first prize, and *R* the second. A due attention to order and rotation should prevail in all rewards and appointments. Everything should go according to rule. *Rule* must precede merit."

"I should certainly have voted for myself, had I not been among the judges," said the mule. "People must take into account not only how quickly one goes, but what other circumstances are in question; as, for instance, how much one carries. But I would not this time have thought about that, neither about the hare's wisdom in his flight—his tact in springing suddenly to one side, to put his pursuers on the wrong scent, away from his place of concealment. No; there is one thing many people think much of, and which ought never to be disregarded. It is called *THE BEAUTIFUL*. I saw that in the hare's charming, well-grown ears; it is quite a pleasure to see how long they are. I fancied that I beheld myself when I was little, and so I voted for him."

"Hush!" said the fly. "As for me I will not speak; I will only say one word. I know right well that I have outrun more than one hare. The other day I broke the hind legs of one of the young ones. I was sitting on the locomotive before the train: I often do that. One sees so well there one's own speed. A young hare ran for a long time in front of the engine; he had no idea that I was there. At length he was just going to turn off the line, when the locomotive went over his hind legs and broke them, for I was sitting on it. The hare remained lying there, but I drove on. This was surely getting before him; but I do not care for the prize."

"It appears to me," thought the wild rose, but she did not say it—it is not her nature to express her ideas openly, though it might have been well had she done so—"it appears to me that the sunbeam should

have had the first prize of honor, and the second also. It passes in a moment the immeasurable space from the sun down to us, and comes with such power that all nature is awakened by it. It has such beauty, that all we roses redden and become fragrant under it. The high presiding authorities do not seem to have noticed *it* at all. Were I the Sunbeam, I would give each of them a sunstroke—that I would; but it would only make them crazy, and they will very likely be that without it. I shall say nothing,” thought the wild rose. “There is peace in the wood; it is delightful to blossom, to shed refreshing perfume around, to live amidst the songs of birds and the rustling of trees; but the sun’s rays will outlive us all.”

“What is the first prize?” asked the earthworm, who had overslept himself, and only now joined them.

“It is free entrance to the kitchen garden,” said the mule. “I proposed the prize. The hare ought to have it; and so I thought, as a clear-sighted and judicious member of the meeting, that this was a sensible view of the matter. I was resolved he should have it, and he is now provided for. The Snail has permission to sit on the stone fence, and to enjoy the moss and the sunshine; and, moreover, he is appointed to be one of the chief judges of the next race. It is well to have one who is practically acquainted with the business in hand—on a committee, as human beings call it. I must say I expect great things from the future—we have made so good a beginning.”

THE TRAVELING COMPANION

Poor JOHN was very sad; for his father was very ill, and just dying. There was no one but the two in the little room, and the lamp had nearly burned out; for it was late in the night.

“You have been a good son, John,” said the sick father, “and God will help you on in the world.” He looked at him, as he spoke, with mild, earnest eyes, drew a deep sigh, and died; yet it appeared as if he still slept.

John wept bitterly. He had no one in the wide world now; neither father, mother, brother, nor sister. Poor John! he knelt down by the bed, kissed his dead father’s hand, and wept many, many bitter tears; but at last his eyes closed, and he fell asleep with his head resting against the hard bedpost.

Then he dreamed a strange dream: he thought he saw the sun shining upon him, and his father alive and well, and even heard him laugh-

ing as he used to do when he was very happy. A beautiful girl, with a golden crown on her head, and long, shining hair, gave him her hand; and his father said, "See what a bride you have won. She is the loveliest maiden on the whole earth." Then he awoke, and all the beautiful things vanished before his eyes, his father lay dead on the bed, and he was all alone. Poor John!

The week after, the dead man was buried. John walked behind the coffin which contained his father, whom he so dearly loved, and would never again see. He heard the earth fall on the coffin-lid, and watched it till only a corner remained in sight, and at last that also disappeared. He felt as if his heart would break with its weight of sorrow, till those who stood round the grave sang a psalm, and the sweet, holy tones brought tears into his eyes, which relieved him. The sun shone brightly down on the green trees, as if it would say, "You must not be so sorrowful, John. Do you see the beautiful blue sky above you? Your father is up there, and he prays to the loving Father of all, that you may do well in the future."

"I will always be good," said John, "and then I shall go to be with my father in heaven. What joy it will be when we see each other again! How much I shall have to relate to him, and how many things he will be able to explain to me of the delights of heaven, and teach me as he once did on earth. O, what joy it will be!"

John pictured it all so plainly to himself, that he smiled even while the tears ran down his cheeks.

The little birds in the chestnut trees twittered, "Tweet, tweet"; they were so happy, although they had seen the funeral; but they seemed as if they knew that the dead man was now in heaven, and that he had wings much larger and more beautiful than their own; that he was happy now, because he had been good here on earth, and they were glad of it. John saw them fly away out of the green trees into the wide world, and he longed to fly with them; but first he cut out a large wooden cross, to place on his father's grave; and when he brought it there in the evening, he found the grave decked out with gravel and flowers. Strangers had done this—they who had known the good old father who was now dead, and who had loved him very much.

Early the next morning, John packed up his little bundle of clothes, and placed all his money, which consisted of fifty dollars and a few shillings, in his girdle; with this he determined to try his fortune in the world. But first he went into the church yard; and, by his father's grave, he said "Our Father"; and then added: "Farewell, dear father; I will always be a true and good man, and do thou ask the good God to make me good."

And as he passed through the fields, all the flowers looked fresh and

beautiful in the warm sunshine, and nodded in the wind, as if they wished to say, "Welcome to the green wood; here all is fresh and bright."

Then John turned to have one more look at the old church, in which he had been christened in his infancy, and where his father had taken him every Sunday to hear the service and join in singing the psalms. As he looked at the old tower, he espied the ringer standing at one of the narrow openings, with his little pointed red cap on his head, and shading his eyes from the sun with his bent arm. John nodded farewell to him; and the little ringer waved his red cap, laid his hand on his heart, and kissed his hand to him a great many times, to show that he felt kindly towards him, and wished him a prosperous journey.

John continued his journey, and thought of all the wonderful things he should see in the large, beautiful world, till he found himself farther away from home than ever he had been before. He did not even know the names of the places he passed through, and could scarcely understand the language of the people he met, for he was far away in a strange land. The first night he slept on a haystack, out in the fields, for there was no other bed for him; but it seemed to him so nice and comfortable that even a king need not wish for a better. The field, the brook, the haystack, with the blue sky above, formed a beautiful bedroom. The green grass, with the little red and white flowers, was the carpet; the elder bushes and the hedges of wild roses looked like garlands on the walls; and for a bath he could have the clear, fresh water of the brook; while the rushes bowed their heads to him, to wish him good morning and good evening. The moon, like a large lamp, hung high up in the blue ceiling, and he had no fear of its setting fire to his curtains. John slept here quite safely all night; and when he awoke, the sun was up, and all the little birds were singing round him, "Good morning! good morning! Are you not up yet?"

It was Sunday, and the bells were ringing for church. As the people went in, John followed them; he heard God's word, joined in singing the psalms, and listened to the preacher. It seemed to him just as if he were in his own church, where he had been christened, and had sung the psalms with his father. Out in the churchyard were several graves, and on some of them the grass had grown very high. John thought of his father's grave, which he knew at last would look like these, as he was not there to weed and attend to it. Then he set to work, pulled up the high grass, raised the wooden crosses which had fallen down, and replaced the wreaths which had been blown away from their places by the wind, thinking all the time, "Perhaps some one is doing the same for my father's grave, as I am not there to do it."

Outside the churchyard door stood an old beggar, leaning on his

crutch. John gave him his silver shillings, and then he continued his journey, feeling lighter and happier than ever. Towards evening, the weather became very stormy, and he hastened on as quickly as he could, to get shelter: but it was quite dark by the time he reached a little lonely church which stood on a hill. "I will go in here," he said, "and sit down in a corner; for I am quite tired, and want rest."

So he went in, and seated himself; then he folded his hands, and offered up his evening prayer, and was soon fast asleep and dreaming, while the thunder rolled and the lightning flashed without. When he awoke, it was still night; but the storm had ceased, and the moon shone in upon him through the windows. Then he saw an open coffin standing in the center of the church, which contained a dead man, waiting for burial. John was not at all timid; he had a good conscience, and he knew also that the dead can never injure anyone. It is living, wicked men who do harm to others. Two such wicked persons stood now by the dead man, who had been brought to the church to be buried. Their evil intentions were to throw the poor dead body outside the church door, and not leave him to rest in his coffin.

"Why do you do this?" asked John, when he saw what they were going to do; "it is very wicked. Leave him to rest in peace, in Christ's name."

"Bosh!" replied the two dreadful men. "He has cheated us; he owed us money which he could not pay, and now he is dead we shall not get a penny; so we mean to have our revenge, and let him lie like a dog outside the church door."

"I have only fifty dollars," said John; "it is all I own in the world, but I will give it to you if you will promise me faithfully to leave the dead man in peace. I shall be able to get on without the money; I have strong and healthy limbs, and God will always help me."

"Why, of course," said the horrid men, "if you will pay his debt we will both promise not to touch him. You may depend upon that"; and then they took the money he offered them, laughed at him for his good nature, and went their way.

Then he laid the dead body back in the coffin, folded the hands, and took leave of it; and went away contentedly through the great forest. All around him he could see the prettiest little elves dancing in the moonlight, which shone through the trees. They were not disturbed by his appearance, for they knew he was good and harmless among men. They are wicked people only who can never obtain a glimpse of fairies. Some of them were not taller than the breadth of a finger, and they wore golden combs in their long yellow hair. They were rocking themselves two together on the large dewdrops with which the leaves and the high grass were sprinkled. Sometimes the dewdrops would roll

away, and then they fell down between the stems of the long grass, and caused a great deal of laughing and noise among the other little people. It was quite charming to watch them at play. Then they sang songs, and John remembered that he had learned those pretty songs when he was a little boy. Large speckled spiders, with silver crowns on their heads, were employed to spin suspension bridges and palaces from one hedge to another, and when the tiny drops fell upon them, they glittered in the moonlight like shining glass. This continued till sunrise. Then the little elves crept into the flower buds, and the wind seized the bridges and palaces, and fluttered them in the air like cobwebs.

As John left the wood, a strong man's voice called after him, "Hallo, comrade, where are you traveling?"

"Into the wide world," he replied; "I am only a poor lad; I have neither father nor mother, but God will help me."

"I am going into the wide world also," replied the Stranger; "shall we keep each other company?"

"With all my heart," said he; and so they went on together. Soon they began to like each other very much, for they were both good; but John found out that the Stranger was much more clever than himself. He had traveled all over the world, and could describe almost everything. The sun was high in the heavens when they seated themselves under a large tree to eat their breakfast. and at the same moment an old woman came toward them.

She was very old and almost bent double. She leaned upon a stick and carried on her back a bundle of firewood, which she had collected in the forest; her apron was tied round it, and John saw three great stems of fern and some willow twigs peeping out. Just as she came close up to them, her foot slipped and she fell to the ground screaming loudly: poor old woman, she had broken her leg! John proposed directly that they should carry the old woman home to her cottage; but the Stranger opened his knapsack and took out a box, in which he said he had a salve that would quickly make her leg well and strong again, so that she would be able to walk home herself, as if her leg had never been broken. And all that he would ask in return was the three fern stems which she carried in her apron.

"That is rather too high a price," said the old woman nodding her head quite strangely. She did not seem at all inclined to part with the fern stems. However, it was not very agreeable to lie there with a broken leg, so she gave them to him; and such was the power of the ointment, that no sooner had he rubbed her leg with it than the old mother rose up and walked even better than she had done before. But then this wonderful ointment could not be bought at an apothecary's.

"What can you want with those three fern rods?" asked John of his fellow-traveler.

"O they will make capital brooms," said he; "and I like them because I am a whimsical fellow." Then they walked on together for a long distance.

"How dark the sky is becoming," said John; "and look at those thick, heavy clouds."

"Those are not clouds," replied his fellow-traveler; "they are mountains—large lofty mountains—on the tops of which we should be above the clouds, in the pure, free air. Believe me, it is delightful to ascend so high; tomorrow we shall be there." But the mountains were not so near as they appeared; they had to travel a whole day before they reached them, and pass through black forests and piles of rock as large as a town. The journey had been so fatiguing that John and his fellow-traveler stopped to rest at a roadside inn, so that they might gain strength for their journey on the morrow. In the large public room of the inn a great many persons were assembled to see a comedy performed by dolls. The showman had just erected his little theatre, and the people were sitting round the room to witness the performance. Right in front, in the very best place, sat a stout butcher, with a great bulldog by his side who seemed very much inclined to bite. He sat staring with all his eyes, and so indeed did every one else in the room. And then the play began. It was a pretty piece, with a king and queen in it, who sat on a beautiful throne, and had gold crowns on their heads. The trains to their dresses were very long, according to the fashion; while the prettiest of wooden dolls, with glass eyes and large moustaches, stood at the doors, and opened and shut them, that the fresh air might come into the room. It was a very pleasant play, not at all mournful; but just as the Queen stood up and walked across the stage, the great bulldog, who should have been held back by his master, made a spring forward, and caught the Queen in his teeth by the slender waist, so that it snapped in two. This was a very dreadful disaster. The poor man, who was exhibiting the dolls, was much annoyed, and quite sad about his Queen; she was the prettiest doll he had, and the bulldog had broken her head and shoulders off. But after all the people were gone away, the stranger, who came with John, said that he could soon set her to rights. And then he brought out his box and rubbed the doll with some of the salve with which he had cured the old woman when she broke her leg. As soon as this was done the doll's back became quite right again; her head and shoulders were fixed on, and she could even move her limbs herself: there was now no occasion to pull the wires, for the doll acted just like a living creature, excepting that she could not speak. The man to whom the show belonged was quite delighted at having a

doll who could dance of herself without being pulled by the wires; none of the other dolls could do this.

During the night, when all the people at the inn were gone to bed, some one was heard to sigh so deeply and painfully, and the sighing continued for so long a time, that every one got up to see what could be the matter. The Showman went at once to his little theatre and found that it proceeded from the dolls, who all lay on the floor sighing pitiously, and staring with their glass eyes; they all wanted to be rubbed with the ointment, so that, like the Queen, they might be able to move of themselves. The Queen threw herself on her knees, took off her beautiful crown, and, holding it in her hand, cried, "Take this from me, but do rub my husband and his courtiers."

The poor man who owned the theatre could scarcely refrain from weeping; he was so sorry that he could not help them. Then he immediately spoke to John's comrade, and promised him all the money he might receive at the next evening's performance, if he would only rub the ointment on four or five of his dolls. But the fellow-traveler said he did not require anything in return, excepting the sword which the Showman wore by his side. As soon as he received the sword he anointed six of the dolls with the ointment, and they were able immediately to dance so gracefully that all the living girls in the room could not help joining in the dance. The coachman danced with the cook, and the waiters with the chambermaids, and all the strangers joined; even the tongs and the fire shovel made an attempt, but they fell down after the first jump. So, after all, it was a very merry night. The next morning John and his companion left the inn to continue their journey through the great pine forests and over the high mountains. They arrived at last at such a great height that towns and villages lay beneath them, and the church steeples looked like little specks between the green trees. They could see for miles around, far away to places they had never visited, and John saw more of the beautiful world than he had ever known before. The sun shone brightly in the blue firmament above, and through the clear mountain air came the sound of the huntsman's horn, and the soft, sweet notes brought tears into his eyes, and he could not help exclaiming. "How good and loving God is to give us all this beauty and loveliness in the world to make us happy!"

His fellow-traveler stood by with folded hands, gazing on the dark woods and the towns bathed in the warm sunshine. At this moment there sounded over their heads sweet music. They looked up, and discovered a large white swan hovering in the air, and singing as never bird sang before. But the song soon became weaker and weaker, the bird's head drooped, and he sunk slowly down, and lay dead at their feet.

"It is a beautiful bird," said the traveler, "and these large white wings are worth a great deal of money. I will take them with me. You see now that a sword will be very useful."

So he cut off the wings of the dead swan with one blow, and carried them away with him.

They now continued their journey over the mountains for many miles, till they at length reached a large city, containing hundreds of towers, that shone in the sunshine like silver. In the midst of the city stood a splendid marble palace, roofed with pure red gold, in which dwelt the King. John and his companion would not go into the town immediately; so they stopped at an inn outside the town, to change their clothes; for they wished to appear respectable as they walked through the streets. The landlord told them that the King was a very good man, who never injured any one; but as to his daughter, "Heaven defend us!"

She was indeed a wicked Princess. She possessed beauty enough—nobody could be more elegant or prettier than she was; but what of that? for she was a wicked witch; and in consequence of her conduct many noble young princes had lost their lives. Any one was at liberty to make her an offer; were he a prince or a beggar, it mattered not to her. She would ask him to guess three things which she had just thought of, and if he succeeded, he was to marry her, and be king over all the land when her father died; but if he could not guess these three things, then she ordered him to be hanged or to have his head cut off. The old King, her father, was very much grieved at her conduct, but he could not prevent her from being so wicked, because he once said he would have nothing more to do with her lovers; she might do as she pleased. Each prince who came and tried the three guesses, so that he might marry the Princess, had been unable to find them out, and had been hanged or beheaded. They had all been warned in time, and might have left her alone, if they would. The old King became at last so distressed at all these dreadful circumstances, that for a whole day every year he and his soldiers knelt and prayed that the Princess might become good; but she continued as wicked as ever. The old women who drank brandy would color it quite black before they drank it, to show how they mourned; and what more could they do?

"What a horrible princess!" said John; "she ought to be well flogged. If I were the old King, I would have her punished in some way."

Just then they heard the people outside shouting, "Hurrah!" and, looking out, they saw the Princess passing by; and she was really so beautiful that everybody forgot her wickedness, and shouted, "Hurrah!" Twelve lovely maidens in white silk dresses, holding golden tulips in their hands, rode by her side on coal-black horses. The Princess herself had a snow-white steed, decked with diamonds and rubies. Her

dress was of cloth of gold, and the whip she held in her hand looked like a sunbeam. The golden crown on her head glittered like the stars of heaven, and her mantle was formed of thousands of butterflies' wings sewn together. Yet she herself was more beautiful than all.

When John saw her, his face became as red as a drop of blood, and he could scarcely utter a word. The Princess looked exactly like the beautiful lady with the golden crown, of whom he had dreamed on the night his father died. She appeared to him so lovely that he could not help loving her.

"It could not be true," he thought, "that she was really a wicked witch, who ordered people to be hanged or beheaded, if they could not guess her thoughts. Every one has permission to go and ask her hand, even the poorest beggar. I shall pay a visit to the palace," he said; "I must go, for I cannot help myself."

Then they all advised him not to attempt it; for he would be sure to share the same fate as the rest. His fellow-traveler also tried to persuade him against it; but John seemed quite sure of success. He brushed his shoes and his coat, washed his face and his hands, combed his soft flaxen hair, and then went out alone into the town, and walked to the palace.

"Come in," said the King, as John knocked at the door. John opened it, and the old King, in a dressing gown and embroidered slippers, came toward him. He had the crown on his head, carried his scepter in one hand, and the orb in the other. "Wait a bit," said he, and he placed the orb under his arm, so that he could offer the other hand to John; but when he found that John was another suitor, he began to weep so violently that both the scepter and the orb fell to the floor, and he was obliged to wipe his eyes with his dressing gown. Poor old King! "Let her alone," he said; "you will fare as badly as all the others. Come. I will show you." Then he led him out into the Princess' pleasure gardens, and there he saw a frightful sight. On every tree hung three or four king's sons who had wooed the Princess, but had not been able to guess the riddles she gave them. Their skeletons rattled in every breeze, so that the terrified birds never dared to venture into the garden. All the flowers were supported by human bones instead of sticks, and human skulls in the flowerpots grinned horribly. It was really a doleful garden for a princess. "Do you see all this?" said the old King; "your fate will be the same as those who are here. therefore do not attempt it. You really make me very unhappy—I take these things to heart so very much."

John kissed the good old King's hand, and said he was sure it would be all right, for he was quite enchanted with the beautiful Princess. Then the Princess herself came riding into the palace yard with all her ladies, and he wished her "Good morning." She looked wonderfully fair

and lovely when she offered her hand to John, and he loved her more than ever. How could she be a wicked witch, as all the people asserted? He accompanied her into the hall, and the little pages offered them gingerbread nuts and sweetmeats; but the old King was so unhappy he could eat nothing, and besides, gingerbread nuts were too hard for him. It was decided that John should come to the palace the next day, when the judges and the whole of the counselors would be present, to try if he could guess the first riddle. If he succeeded, he would have to come a second time; but if not, he would lose his life—and no one had ever been able to guess even one. However, John was not at all anxious about the result of his trial; on the contrary, he was very merry. He thought only of the beautiful Princess, and believed that in some way he should have help, but how he knew not, and did not like to think about it; so he danced along the highroad as he went back to the inn, where he had left his fellow-traveler waiting for him. John could not refrain from telling him how gracious the Princess had been, and how beautiful she looked. He longed for the next day so much, that he might go to the palace and try his luck at guessing the riddles. But his comrade shook his head, and looked very mournful. "I do so wish you to do well," said he; "we might have continued together much longer, and now I am likely to lose you; you poor dear John! I could shed tears, but I will not make you unhappy on the last night we may be together. We will be merry, really merry this evening; tomorrow, after you are gone, I shall be able to weep undisturbed."

It was very quickly known among the inhabitants of the town that another suitor had arrived for the Princess, and there was great sorrow in consequence. The theatre remained closed, the women who sold sweetmeats tied crape round the sugar sticks, and the King and the priests were on their knees in the church. There was a great lamentation, for no one expected John to succeed better than those who had been suitors before.

In the evening John's comrade prepared a large bowl of punch, and said, "Now let us be merry, and drink to the health of the Princess." But after drinking two glasses, John became so sleepy, that he could not possibly keep his eyes open, and fell fast asleep. Then his fellow-traveler lifted him gently out of his chair, and laid him on the bed; and as soon as it was quite dark, he took the two large wings which he had cut from the dead swan, and tied them firmly to his own shoulders. Then he put into his pocket the largest of the three rods which he had obtained from the old woman who had fallen and broken her leg. After this he opened the window, and flew away over the town, straight towards the palace, and seated himself in a corner, under the window which looked into the bedroom of the Princess.

The town was perfectly still when the clocks struck a quarter to twelve. Presently the window opened, and the Princess, who had large black wings to her shoulders, and a long white mantle, flew away over the city towards a high mountain. The fellow-traveler, who had made himself invisible, so that she could not possibly see him, flew after her through the air, and whipped the Princess with his rod, so that the blood came whenever he struck her. Ah, it was a strange flight through the air! The wind caught her mantle, so that it spread out on all sides, like the large sail of a ship, and the moon shone through it. "How it hails, to be sure!" said the Princess, at each blow she received from the rod; and it served her right to be whipped.

At last she reached the side of the mountain, and knocked. The mountain opened with a noise like the roll of thunder, and the Princess went in. The traveler followed her; no one could see him, as he had made himself invisible. They went through a long, wide passage. A thousand gleaming spiders ran here and there on the walls, causing them to glitter as if they were illuminated with fire. They next entered a large hall built of silver and gold. Large red and blue flowers shone on the walls, looking like sunflowers in size; but no one could dare to pluck them, for the stems were hideous poisonous snakes, and the flowers were flames of fire, darting out of their jaws. Shining glowworms covered the ceiling, and sky-blue bats flapped their transparent wings. Altogether the place had a frightful appearance. In the middle of the floor stood a throne supported by four skeleton horses, whose harness had been made by fiery-red spiders. The throne itself was made of milk-white glass, and the cushions were little black mice, each biting the other's tail. Over it hung a canopy of rose-colored spider webs, spotted with the prettiest little green flies, which sparkled like precious stones. On the throne sat an old Magician with a crown on his ugly head, and a scepter in his hand. He kissed the Princess on the forehead, seated her by his side on the splendid throne, and then the music commenced. Great black grasshoppers played the mouth organ, and the owl struck herself on the body instead of a drum. It was altogether a ridiculous concert. Little black goblins with false lights in their caps danced about the hall; but no one could see the traveler, and he had placed himself just behind the throne where he could see and hear everything. The courtiers who came in afterwards looked noble and grand; but any one with common sense could see what they really were, only broomsticks, with cabbages for heads. The Magician had given them life, and dressed them in embroidered robes. It answered very well, as they were only wanted for show. After there had been a little dancing, the Princess told the Magician that she had a new suitor, and asked him what she should think of for the suitor to guess when he came to the castle the next morning.

"Listen to what I say," said the Magician; "you must choose something very easy: he is less likely to guess it then. Think of one of your shoes: he will never imagine it is that. Then cut his head off; and mind you do not forget to bring his eyes with you tomorrow night, that I may eat them."

The Princess curtsied low, and said she would not forget the eyes.

The Magician then opened the mountain and she flew home again, but the traveler followed and flogged her so much with the rod, that she sighed quite deeply about the heavy hailstorm, and made as much haste as she could to get back to her bedroom through the window. The traveler then returned to the inn where John still slept, took off his wings and lay down on the bed, for he was very tired. Early in the morning John awoke, and when his fellow-traveler got up, he said that he had had a very wonderful dream about the Princess and her shoe; he therefore advised John to ask her if she had not thought of her shoe. Of course the traveler knew this from what the Magician in the mountain had said.

"I may as well say that as anything else," said John. "Perhaps your dream may come true; still I will say farewell, for if I guess wrong I shall never see you again."

Then they embraced each other, and John went into the town and walked to the palace. The great hall was full of people, and the judges sat in armchairs, with eider-down cushions to rest their heads upon, because they had so much to think of. The old King stood near, wiping his eyes with his white handkerchief. When the Princess entered, she looked even more beautiful than she had appeared the day before, and greeted every one present most gracefully; but to John she gave her hand, and said, "Good morning to you."

Now came the time for John to guess what she was thinking of; and O, how kindly she looked at him as she spoke. But when he uttered the single word *shoe*, she turned as pale as a ghost; all her wisdom could not help her, for he had guessed rightly. O, how pleased the old King was! It was quite amusing to see how he capered about. All the people clapped their hands, both on his account and John's, who had guessed rightly the first time. His fellow-traveler was glad also, when he heard how successful John had been. But John folded his hands, and thanked God, who, he felt quite sure, would help him again; and he knew he had to guess twice more. The evening passed pleasantly like the one preceding. While John slept, his companion flew behind the Princess to the mountain, and flogged her even harder than before; this time he had taken two rods with him. No one saw him go in with her, and he heard all that was said. The Princess this time was to think of a glove, and he

told John as if he had again heard it in a dream. The next day, therefore, he was able to guess correctly the second time, and it caused great rejoicing at the palace. The whole court jumped about as they had seen the King do the day before, but the Princess lay on the sofa, and would not say a single word. All now depended upon John. If he only guessed rightly the third time, he would marry the Princess, and reign over the kingdom after the death of the old King; but if he failed, he would lose his life, and the Magician would have his beautiful blue eyes. That evening John said his prayers and went to bed very early, and soon fell asleep calmly. But his companion tied on his wings to his shoulders, took three rods, and, with his sword at his side, flew to the palace. It was a very dark night, and so stormy that the tiles flew from the roofs of the houses, and the trees in the garden upon which the skeletons hung, bent themselves like reeds before the wind. The lightning flashed, and the thunder rolled in one long-continued peal all night. The window of the castle opened, and the Princess flew out. She was pale as death, but she laughed at the storm as if it were not bad enough. Her white mantle fluttered in the wind like a large sail, and the traveler flogged her with the three rods till the blood trickled down, and at last she could scarcely fly; she contrived, however, to reach the mountain. "What a hailstorm!" she said, as she entered; "I have never been out in such weather as this."

"Yes, there may be too much of a good thing sometimes," said the Magician.

Then the Princess told him that John had guessed rightly the second time, and if he succeeded the next morning, he would win, and she could never come to the mountain again, or practice magic as she had done, and therefore she was quite unhappy.

"I will find out something for you to think of which he will never guess, unless he is a greater conjuror than myself," said the Magician. "But now let us be merry."

Then he took the Princess by both hands, and they danced with all the little goblins and jack-o'-lanterns in the room. The red spiders sprang here and there on the walls quite as merrily, and the flowers of fire appeared as if they were throwing out sparks. The owl beat the drum, the crickets whistled, and the grasshoppers played the mouth organ. It was a very ridiculous ball. After they had danced enough, the Princess was obliged to go home, for fear she should be missed at the palace. The Magician offered to go with her, that they might be company to each other on the way. Then they flew away through the bad weather, and the traveler followed them, and broke his three rods across their shoulders. The Magician had never been out in such a

hallstorm as this. Just by the palace the Magician stopped to wish the Princess farewell, and to whisper in her ear, "Tomorrow think of my head."

But the traveler heard it, and just as the Princess slipped through the window into her bedroom, and the Magician turned round to fly back to the mountain, he seized him by the long black beard, and with his saber cut off the wicked conjuror's head just behind his shoulders, so that he could not even see who it was. He threw the body into the sea to the fishes, and, after dipping the head into the water, he tied it up in a silk handkerchief, took it with him to the inn, and then went to bed. The next morning he gave John the handkerchief, and told him not to untie it till the Princess asked him what she was thinking of. There were so many people in the great hall of the palace that they stood as thick as radishes tied together in a bundle. The council sat in their armchairs with the white cushions. The old King wore new robes, and the golden crown and scepter had been polished up so that he looked quite smart. But the Princess was very pale, and wore a black dress as if she were going to a funeral.

"What have I thought of?" asked the Princess, of John. He immediately untied the handkerchief, and was himself quite frightened when he saw the head of the ugly Magician. Every one shuddered, for it was terrible to look at; but the Princess sat like a statue and could not utter a single word. At length she rose and gave John her hand, for he had guessed rightly.

She looked at no one, but sighed deeply, and said, "You are my master now; this evening our marriage must take place"

"I am very much pleased to hear it," said the old King. "It is just what I wish."

Then all the people shouted "Hurrah!" The band played music in the street, the bells rang, and the cake-women took the black crape off the sugar sticks. There was universal joy. Three oxen, stuffed with ducks and chickens, were roasted whole in the market place, where every one might help himself to a slice. The fountains spouted forth the most delicious wine, and whoever bought a penny loaf at the baker's received six large buns, full of raisins, as a present. In the evening the whole town was illuminated. The soldiers fired off cannons, and the boys let off crackers. There was eating and drinking, dancing and jumping everywhere. In the palace, the high-born gentlemen and the beautiful ladies danced with each other, and they could be heard at a great distance singing the following song—

*Here are maidens, young and fair,
Dancing in the summer air;
Like to spinning wheels at play,*

*Pretty maidens dance away—
Dance the spring and summer through
Till the sole falls from your shoe.*

But the Princess was still a witch, and she could not love John. His fellow-traveler had thought of that, so he gave John three feathers out of the swan's wings, and a little bottle with a few drops in it. He told him to place a large bath full of water by the Princess's bed, and put the feathers and the drops into it. Then, at the moment she was about to get into bed, he must give her a little push, so that she might fall into the water, and then dip her three times. This would destroy the power of the Magician, and she would love him very much.

John did all that his companion told him to do. The Princess shrieked aloud when he dipped her under the water the first time, and struggled under his hands in the form of a great black swan with fiery eyes. As she rose the second time from the water, the swan had become white, with a black ring round its neck. John allowed the water to close once more over the bird, and at the same time it changed into a most beautiful Princess. She was more lovely even than before, and thanked him, while her eyes sparkled with tears, for having broken the spell of the Magician.

The next day, the King came with the whole court to offer their congratulations, and stayed till quite late. Last of all came the traveling companion; he had his staff in his hand and his knapsack on his back. John kissed him many times and told him he must not go, he must remain with him, for he was the cause of all his good fortune. But the traveler shook his head, and said gently and kindly, "No: my time is up now; I have only paid my debt to you. Do you remember the dead man whom the bad people wished to throw out of his coffin? You gave all you possessed that he might rest in his grave; I am the dead man." As he said this, he vanished.

The wedding festivities lasted a whole month. John and his Princess loved each other dearly, and the old King lived to see many a happy day, when he took their little children on his knees and let them play with his scepter. And John became king over the whole country.

THE MARSH KING'S DAUGHTER

THE STORKS have a great many stories which they tell their little ones, all about the bogs and the marshes. They suit them to their ages and capacities. The youngest ones are quite satisfied with "Krib-

ble krabble," or some such nonsense, but the older ones want something with more meaning in it, or at any rate something about the family. We all know one of the two oldest and longest tales which have been kept up among the storks: the one about Moses, who was placed by his mother on the waters of the Nile and found there by the King's daughter. How she reared him and how he became a great man whose burial place nobody to this day knows. This is all common knowledge.

The other story is not known yet because the storks have kept it among themselves. It has been handed on from one mother stork to another for more than a thousand years, and each succeeding mother has told it better and better. And now we shall tell it best of all.

The first pair of storks who told it—and they actually lived it—had their summer quarters on the roof of the Viking's timbered house up by the Wild Bog in Wendsyssel. It is in the county of Hjørring, high up towards the Skaw in the north of Jutland, if we are to describe it according to the authorities. There is still a great bog there which we may read about in the county chronicles. This district used to be under the sea at one time, but the ground has risen and it stretches for miles. It is surrounded on every side by marshy meadows, quagmires, and peat bogs, on which grow cloud berries and stunted bushes. There is nearly always a damp mist hanging over it, and seventy years ago it was still overrun with wolves. It may well be called the Wild Bog, and one can imagine how desolate and dreary it was among these swamps and pools a thousand years ago.

In detail everything is much the same now as it was then. The reeds grow to the same height and have the same kind of long purple-brown leaves with feathery tips as now. The birch still grows there with its white bark and its delicate, loosely hanging leaves. As for living creatures, the flies still wear their gauzy draperies of the same cut, and the storks, now as then, still dress in black and white, with long red stockings.

The people then certainly wore a very different cut of clothes from those worn nowadays, but if any of them, serf or huntsman or anybody at all, stepped on the quagmires, the same fate befell him a thousand years ago as would overtake him now. In he would go and down he would sink to the Marsh King, as they call him. He rules down below over the whole kingdom of bogs and swamps. He might also be called King of the Quagmires, but we prefer to call him the Marsh King, as the storks did. We know very little about his rule, but that is perhaps just as well.

Near the bogs, close to the arm of the Cattegat called the Limfiord, lay the timbered hall of the Vikings, with its stone cellar, its tower, and its three stories. The storks had built their nest on the top of the

roof, and the mother stork was sitting on the eggs which she was quite sure would soon be successfully hatched.

One evening father stork stayed out rather late, and when he came back he looked somewhat ruffled.

"I have something terrible to tell you," he said to the mother stork.

"Don't tell it to me then," she answered. "Remember that I am sitting! It might upset me and that would be bad for the eggs."

"You will have to know it," said he. "She has come here—the daughter of our host in Egypt. She has ventured to take the journey, and now she has disappeared."

"She who is related to the fairies? Tell me all about it. You know I can't bear to be kept waiting now I am sitting."

"Look here, mother! She must have believed what the doctor said, as you told me. She believed that the marsh flowers up here would do something for her father, and she flew over here in feather plumage with the other two Princesses, who have to come north every year to take the baths to make themselves young. She came, and she has vanished."

"You go into too many particulars," said the mother stork. "The eggs might get a chill, and I can't stand being kept in suspense."

"I have been on the lookout," said father stork, "and tonight when I was among the reeds where the quagmire will hardly bear me, I saw three swans flying along, and there was something about their flight which said to me, 'Watch them! They are not real swans. They are only in swan's plumage.' You know, mother, as well as I do, that one feels intuitively whether or not things are what they seem to be."

"Yes, indeed!" she said. "But tell me about the Princess. I am quite tired of hearing about swan's plumage."

"You know that in the middle of the bog there is a kind of lake," said father stork. "You can see a bit of it from here if you raise your head. Well, there was a big alder stump between the bushes and the quagmire, and on this the three swans settled, flapping their wings and looking about them. Then one of them threw off the swan's plumage and I at once recognized her as our Princess from Egypt. There she sat with no covering but her long black hair. I heard her beg the two others to take good care of the swan's plumage while she dived under the water to pick up the marsh flower which she thought she could see. They nodded and raised their heads, and lifted up the loose plumage. 'What shall they do with it?' thought I. and she no doubt asked the same thing. And the answer came: she had ocular demonstration of it. They flew up into the air with the feather garment! 'Just you duck down,' they cried. 'Never again will you fly about in the guise of a swan. Never more will you see the land of Egypt. You may sit in your

swamp!' Then they tore the feather garment into a hundred bits, scattering the feathers all over the place like a snowstorm. Then away flew those two good-for-nothing Princesses."

"What a terrible thing!" said mother stork. "But I must have the end of it."

"The Princess moaned and wept. Her tears trickled down upon the alder stump and then it began to move, for it was the Marsh King himself who lives in the bog. I saw the stump turn round and saw that it was no longer a stump. It stretched out long miry branches like arms. The poor child was terrified, and she sprang away onto the shaking quagmire where it would not even bear my weight, far less hers. She sank at once and the alder stump after her. It was dragging her down. Great black bubbles rose in the slime, and then there was nothing more to be seen. Now she is buried in the Wild Bog, and never will she take back to Egypt the flowers she came for. You could not have endured the sight, mother."

"You shouldn't even tell me anything of the sort just now. It might have a bad effect upon the eggs. The Princess must look after herself! She will get help somehow. If it had been you or I now, or one of our sort, all would have been over with us."

"I mean to keep a watch though, every day," said the stork, and he kept his word.

A long time passed, and then one day he saw that a green stem shot up from the fathomless depth. When it reached the surface of the water a leaf appeared at the top, which grew broader and broader. Next a bud appeared close by it, and one morning at dawn, just as the stork was passing, the bud opened out in the warm rays of the sun. And in the middle of it lay a lovely baby, a little girl, looking just as fresh as if she had just come out of a bath. She was so exactly like the Princess from Egypt that at first the stork thought it was she who had grown small. But when he put two and two together, he came to the conclusion that it was her child and the Marsh King's. This explained why she appeared in a water lily.

"She can't stay there very long," thought the stork. "There are too many of us in my nest as it is, but an idea has just come into my head! The Viking's wife has no child, and she has often wished for one. As I am always said to bring the babies, this time I will do so in earnest. I will fly away to the Viking's wife with the baby, and that will indeed be a joy for her."

So the stork took up the little girl and flew away with her to the timbered house, where he picked a hole in the bladder skin which covered the window and laid the baby in the arms of the Viking's wife. This done, he flew home and told the mother stork all about it, and the

young ones heard what he said. They were old enough now to understand.

"So you see, the Princess is not dead. She must have sent the baby up here, and I have found a home for her."

"I said so from the very first," said mother stork. "Now just give a little attention to your own children! It is almost time to start on our own journey. I feel a tingling in my wings every now and then. The cuckoo and the nightingale are already gone, and I hear from the quails that we shall soon have a good wind. Our young ones will do themselves credit at the maneuvers if I know them aright!"

How delighted the Viking's wife was when she woke in the morning and found the little baby on her bosom. She kissed and caressed it, but it screamed and kicked terribly and seemed anything but happy. At last it cried itself to sleep, and as it lay there a prettier little thing could not have been seen. The Viking's wife was delighted. Her body and soul were filled with joy. She was sure that now her husband and all his men would soon come back as unexpectedly as the baby had come. So she and her household busied themselves in putting the house in order against their return. The long, colored tapestries which she and her handmaids had woven with pictures of their gods—Odin, Thor, and Freya as they were called—were hung up. The serfs had to scour and polish the old shields which hung round the walls. Cushions were laid on the benches, and logs upon the great hearth in the middle of the hall, so that the fire might be lighted at once. The Viking's wife helped with all this work herself, so that when evening came she was very tired and slept soundly.

When she woke towards morning, she was much alarmed at finding that the little baby had disappeared. She sprang up and lighted a pine chip and looked about. There was no baby, but at the foot of the bed sat a hideous toad. She was horrified at the sight and seized a heavy stick to kill it, but it looked at her with such curious sad eyes that she had not the heart to strike it. Once more she looked round, and the toad gave a faint pitiful croak which made her start. She jumped out of bed and threw open the window shutter. The sun was just rising and its beams fell upon the bed and the great toad. All at once the monster's wide mouth seemed to contract and to become small and rosy, the limbs stretched and again took their lovely shapes, and it was her own dear little baby which lay there, and not a hideous frog.

"Whatever is this?" she cried. "I had a bad dream. This is my own darling elfin child." She kissed it and pressed it to her heart, but it struggled and bit like a wild kitten.

Neither that day nor the next did the Viking lord come home, although he was on his way. But the winds were against him—they were

blowing southward to help the storks. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good."

In the course of a few days and nights it became clear to the Viking's wife how matters stood with her little baby. Some magic power had a terrible hold over her. In the daytime it was as beautiful as any fairy, though it had a bad wicked temper. At night on the other hand, she became a hideous toad, quiet and pathetic, with sad mournful eyes. There were two natures in her, both in soul and body, continually shifting. The reason was that the little girl brought by the stork had by day her mother's form and her father's evil nature, but at night her kinship with him appeared in her outward form, and her mother's sweet nature and gentle spirit beamed out of the misshapen monster.

Who could release her from the power of this witchcraft? It caused the Viking's wife much grief and trouble, and yet her heart yearned over the unfortunate being. She knew that she would never dare tell her husband the true state of affairs, because he would without doubt, according to custom, have the poor child exposed on the highway for anyone who chose to look after it. The good woman had not the heart to do this, and so she determined that he should see the child only by broad daylight.

One morning there was a sound of storks' wings swishing over the roof. During the night more than a hundred pairs of storks had made it their resting place after the great maneuvers, and they were now trying their wings before starting on their long southward flight.

"Every man ready!" they cried. "All the wives and children too!"

"How light we feel," cried the young storks. "Our legs tingle as if we were full of live frogs. How splendid it is to be traveling to foreign lands!"

"Keep in line," said the father and mother. "And don't let your beaks clatter so fast! It isn't good for the chest." Then away they flew.

At the very same moment a horn sounded over the heath. The Viking had landed with all his men. They were bringing home no end of rich booty from the Gallic coast, where the people cried in terror as did the people of Britain, "Deliver us from the wild Northmen!"

What life and noise came to the Viking's home by the Wild Bog now! The mead cask was brought into the hall, the great fire was lighted, and horses were slaughtered for the feast, which was to be uproarious. The priest sprinkled the thralls with the warm blood of the horses as a consecration. The fire crackled and roared, driving the smoke up under the roof, and the soot dripped down from the beams, but they were used to all that. Guests were invited and they received handsome presents. All feuds and double dealing were forgotten. They drank deeply, and threw the bones in each other's faces when they had

gnawed them, but that was a mark of good feeling. The skald—the minstrel of the times, but he was also a warrior, for he went with them on their expeditions and he knew what he was singing about—gave them one of his ballads recounting all their warlike deeds and their prowess. After every verse came the same refrain: “Fortunes vanish, friends die, one dies oneself, but a glorious name never dies!” Then they banged on the shields and hammered with knives or the knucklebones on the table before them till the hall rang.

The Viking's wife sat on the cross-bench in the banqueting hall. She was dressed in silk with gold bracelets and large amber beads. The skald brought her name into the song too. He spoke of the golden treasure she had brought to her wealthy husband, and of his delight at the beautiful child which he had seen only under its charming daylight guise. He rather admired her passionate nature, and said she would grow into a doughty shield maiden or Valkyrie, able to hold her own in battle. She would be of the kind who would not blink if a practiced hand cut off her eyebrows in jest with a sharp sword.

The barrel of mead came to an end, and a new one was rolled up in its place. This one too was soon drained to the dregs, but they were a hard-headed people who could stand a great deal. They had a proverb then: “The beast knows when it is time to go home from grass, but the fool never knows when he has had enough.” They knew it very well, but people often know one thing and yet do another. They also knew that “The dearest friend becomes a bore if he sits too long in one's house!” but yet they sat on. Meat and drink are such good things! They were a jovial company. At night the thralls slept among the warm ashes, and they dipped their fingers in the sooty grease and licked them. Those were rare times indeed.

The Viking went out once more that year on a raid, although the autumn winds were beginning. He sailed with his men to the coast of Britain. “It is just over the water,” he said. His wife remained at home with the little girl, and certain it was that the foster mother soon grew fonder of the poor toad with the pathetic eyes and plaintive sighs than she was of the little beauty who tore and bit.

The raw, wet autumn fog, the “Gnaw-worm,” which gnaws the leaves off the trees, lay over wood and heath. And “Bird loose-feather,” as they call the snow, followed closely upon the fog. Winter was on its way. The sparrows took the storks' nest under their protection and discussed the absent owners in their own fashion. The stork couple and their young—where were they now?

The storks were in the land of Egypt under such a sun as we have on a warm summer's day. They were surrounded by flowering tamarinds and acacias. Mahomet's crescent glittered from every cupola on

the mosques, and many a pair of storks stood on the slender towers, resting after their long journey. Whole flocks of them had their nests side by side on the mighty pillars, or on the ruined arches of the deserted temples. The date palm lifted high its screen of branches as if to form a sunshade. The grayish-white pyramids stood like shadowy sketches against the clear atmosphere of the desert where the ostrich knew it would find space for its stride. The lion crouched gazing with its great wise eyes at the marble sphinx half buried in the sand. The Nile waters had receded, and the land teemed with frogs. To the storks this was the most splendid sight in all the land. The eyes of the young ones were quite dazzled with the sight.

"See what it is to be here, and we always have the same in our warm country," said the mother stork, and the stomachs of the little ones tingled.

"Is there anything more to see?" they asked. "Shall we go any further inland?"

"There is not much more to see," said the mother stork. "On the fertile side there are only secluded woods where the trees are interlaced by creeping plants. The elephant with its strong clumsy legs is the only creature which can force a way through. The snakes there are too big for us, and the lizards are too nimble. If you go out into the desert, you will get sand in your eyes if the weather is good; and if bad, you may be buried in a sandstorm. No, we are best here. There are plenty of frogs and grasshoppers. Here I stay and you too!" And so she stayed.

The old ones stayed in their nests on the slender minarets, resting themselves but at the same time busily smoothing their feathers and rubbing their beaks upon their red stockings. Or they would lift up their long necks and gravely bow their heads, their brown eyes beaming wisely. The young stork misses walked about gravely among the juicy reeds, casting glances at the young bachelor storks or making acquaintance with them. They would swallow a frog at every third step, or walk about with a small snake dangling from their beak. It had such a good effect, they thought, and then it tasted so good.

The young he-storks engaged in many a petty quarrel, in which they flapped their wings furiously and stabbed each other with their beaks till the blood came. Then they took mates and built nests for themselves. That was what they lived for. New quarrels soon arose, for in these warm countries people are terribly passionate. All the same it was very pleasant to the old ones; nothing that their young ones did could be wrong. There was sunshine every day, and plenty to eat. Nothing to think of but pleasure!

But in the great palace of their Egyptian host, as they called him, matters were not so pleasant. The rich and mighty lord lay stretched

upon his couch, as stiff in every limb as if he had been a mummy. The great painted hall was as gorgeous as if he had been lying within a tulip. Relatives and friends stood around him. He was not dead—yet he could hardly be called living. The healing marsh flower from the northern lands, which was to be found and plucked by the one who loved him best, would never be brought. His young and lovely daughter, who in the plumage of a swan had flown over sea and land to the far north, would never return. The two other swan Princesses had come back, and this is the tale they told:

"We were all flying high up in the air when a huntsman saw us and shot his arrow. It pierced our sister to the heart and she slowly sank. As she sank she sang her farewell song and fell into the midst of a forest pool. There by the shore under a drooping birch we buried her. But we had our revenge: we bound fire under the wings of a swallow which had its nest under the eaves of his cottage. The roof took fire and the cottage blazed up, and he was burnt in it. The flames shone on the pool where she lay, earth of the earth, under a birch tree. Never more will she come back to the land of Egypt."

Then they both wept, and the father stork who heard it clattered with his beak and said, "Pack of lies! I should like to drive my beak right into their breasts."

"Where it would break off, and a nice sight you would be then," said the mother stork "Think of yourself first, and then of your family! Everything else comes second to that."

"I will perch upon the open cupola tomorrow when all the wise and learned folk assemble to talk about the sick man. Perhaps they will get a little nearer to the truth."

The sages met together and talked long and learnedly, but the stork could make neither head nor tail of it. Nothing came of it, however, either for the sick man or for his daughter who was buried in the Wild Bog, but we may just as well hear what they said. We may perhaps understand the story better—or at least as well as the stork did.

"Love is the food of life. The highest love nourishes the highest life. Only through love can this life be won back." This had been said and well said declared the sages.

"It is a beautiful idea," said the father stork at once.

"I don't rightly understand it," said the mother stork. "However, that is not my fault, but the fault of the idea. It really does not matter to me, though. I have other things to think about!"

The sages then talked a great deal about love: the difference between the love of lovers and that of parent and child; the love of vegetation for the light; and how sunbeams kiss the mire and forthwith young shoots spring into being. The whole discourse was so learned that

the father stork could not take it in, far less repeat it. He became quite pensive, however, and stood on one leg for a whole day with his eyes half shut. Learning was a heavy burden to him.

Yet one thing the stork had thoroughly comprehended. He had heard from high and low alike what a misfortune it was to thousands of people and to the whole country that this man should be lying sick without hope of recovery. It would indeed be a blessed day which should see his health restored.

"But where blossoms the flower of healing for him?" they had asked of one another. They had also consulted all their learned writings, the *twinkling stars, the winds, and the waves*. But the only answer that the sages had been able to give was, "Love is the food of life!" How to apply the saying they knew not.

At last all had agreed that succor must come through the Princess, who loved her father with her heart and soul. And they had at last decided what she was to do. It was more than a year and a day since they had sent her at night, when there was a new moon, out into the desert of the sphinx. Here at the base of it she had to push away the sand from the door, and walk through the long passage which led right into the middle of the pyramid, where one of the mightiest of their ancient kings lay swathed in his mummy's bands in the midst of his wealth and glory. Here she had to bend her head to the corpse, and it was revealed to her where she would find healing and salvation for her father.

All this she had done, and the exact spot had been shown her in dreams where in the depths of the morass she would find the lotus flower that would touch her bosom beneath the water. And this she was to bring home. So she flew away in her swan's plumage to the Wild Bog in the far north.

Now all this the father and mother stork had known from the beginning, and we understand the matter better than we did. We know that the Marsh King dragged her down to himself and that to those at home she was dead and gone. The wisest of them said like the mother stork, "She will look out for herself!" So they awaited her return, not knowing in fact what else to do.

"I think I will snatch away the swans' plumage from the two deceitful Princesses," said the father stork. "Then they can not go to the Wild Bog to do any more mischief. I will keep the plumages up there till we find a use for them."

"Up where will you keep them?" asked the mother stork.

"In our nest at the Wild Bog," said he. "The young ones and I can carry them between us. If they are too cumbersome, there are places enough on the way where we can hide them till our next flight. One

plumage would be enough for her, but two are better. It is a good plan to have plenty of wraps in a northern country."

"You will get no thanks for it," said the mother stork, "but you are the master. I have nothing to say except when I am sitting."

In the meantime the little child in the Viking's hall by the Wild Bog, whither the storks flew in the spring, had been given a name. It was Helga, but such a name was far too gentle for such a wild spirit as dwelt within her. Month by month it showed itself more. And year by year, while the storks took the same journey, in autumn towards the Nile and in spring towards the Wild Bog, the little child grew to be a big girl. Before anyone knew how, she was the loveliest maiden possible of sixteen. The husk was lovely, but the kernel was hard and rough—
wilder than most, even in those hard, wild times.

Her greatest pleasure was to dabble her white hands in the blood of the horses slaughtered for sacrifice. In her wild freaks she would bite the heads off the black cocks which the priest was about to slay, and she said in full earnest to her foster father, "If thy foe were to come and throw a rope round the beams of thy house and pull it about thine ears. I would not wake thee if I could. I should not hear him for the tingling of the blood in the ear thou once boxed years ago. I do not forget!"

But the Viking did not believe what she said. Like everybody else he was infatuated by her beauty. nor did he know how body and soul changed places in his little Helga in the dark hours of the night. She rode a horse barebacked as if she were a part of it, nor did she jump off while her steed bit and fought with the other wild horses. She would often throw herself from the cliff into the sea in all her clothes, and swim out to meet the Viking when his boat neared the shore; and she cut off the longest strand of her beautiful long hair to string her bow. "Self-made is well made," said she.

The Viking's wife, though strong-willed and strong-minded after the fashion of the times, became towards her daughter like any other weak, anxious mother, because she knew that a spell rested over the terrible child. Often when her mother stepped out onto the balcony, Helga, from pure love of teasing, it seemed, would sit down upon the edge of the well, throw up her hands and feet, and go backwards plump into the dark narrow hole. Here with her frog's nature she would rise again and clamber out like a cat dripping with water, carrying a perfect stream into the banqueting hall, washing aside the green twigs strewn on the floor.

One bond, however, always held little Helga in check, : d that was twilight. When it drew near she became quiet and pensive, allowing

herself to be called and directed. An inner perception, as it were, drew her towards her mother, and when the sun sank and the transformation took place, she sat sad and quiet, shriveled up into the form of a toad. Her body was now much bigger than those creatures ever are, but for that reason all the more unsightly. She looked like a wretched dwarf with the head of a frog and webbed fingers. There was something so piteous in her eyes, and voice she had none—only a hollow croak like the smothered sobs of a dreaming child.

Then the Viking's wife would take it on her knee, and looking into its eyes would forget the misshapen form and would often say, "I could almost wish that thou would always remain my dumb frog child. Thou art more terrible to look at when thou art clothed in beauty." Then she would write runes against sickness and sorcery and throw them over the miserable girl, but they did no good at all.

"One would never think that she had been small enough to lie in a water lily," said the father stork. "Now that she is grown up, she is the very image of her Egyptian mother, whom we never saw again. She did not manage to take such good care of herself as you and the sages said she would. I have been flying across the marsh, year in and year out, and never have I seen a trace of her. Yes, I may as well tell you that all these years, when I have flown on ahead of you to look after the nest and set it to rights, I have spent many a night flying about like an owl or a bat, scanning the open water, but all to no purpose. Nor have we had any use for the two swan plumages which the young ones and I dragged up here with so much difficulty. It took us three journeys to get them here. They have lain for years now in the bottom of the nest and if ever a disaster happens, such as a fire in the timbered house, they will be entirely lost."

"And our good nest would be lost too," said the mother stork. "But you think less of that than you do of your feather dresses and your marsh Princess. You had better go down to her one day and stay in the mire for good. You are a bad father to your own chicks, and I have always said so since the first time I hatched a brood. If only we or the young ones don't get an arrow through our wings from that mad Viking girl! She doesn't know what she is about. We are rather more at home here than she is, and she ought to remember that. We never forget our obligations. Every year we pay our toll of a feather, an egg, and a young one, as it is only right we should. Do you think that while she is about I care to go down there as I used to do, and as I do in Egypt where I am 'hail fellow well met' with everybody, and where I peep into their pots and kettles if I like? No, indeed. I sit up here vexing myself about her, the vixen, and you too. You should have left her in the water lily, and there would have been an end of her."

"You are much more estimable than your words," said the father stork. "I know you better than you know yourself, my dear." Then he gave a hop and flapped his wings thrice, proudly stretched out his neck, and soared away without moving his outspread wings. When he had gone some distance he made some more powerful strokes, his head and neck bending proudly forward, while his plumage gleamed in the sunshine. What strength and speed there were in his flight!

"He is still the handsomest of them all," said the mother stork, "but I don't tell him so."

The Viking came home early that autumn with his booty and prisoners. Among these was a young Christian priest, one of those men who persecuted the heathen gods of the north. There had often been discussions of late, both in the hall and in the women's bower, about the new faith which was spreading in all the countries to the south. Through Saint Ansgarius it had spread as far as Hedeby on the Schlei. Even little Helga had heard of the belief in the "White Christ," who for love of mankind had given His life for their salvation. As far as Helga was concerned, it had all gone in at one ear and out at the other, as one says. The very meaning of the word "love" seemed to dawn upon her only when she was shriveled up into the form of a frog in her secret chamber. But the Viking's wife had listened to the story and had felt herself strangely moved by these tales about the Son of the only true God.

The men on their return from their raids told them all about the temples of costly polished stone which were raised to Him whose message was love. Once a couple of heavy golden vessels of cunning workmanship were brought home and about them hung a peculiar spicy odor. They were censers used by the Christian priests to swing before the altars on which blood never flowed, but where the bread and wine were changed to the body and blood of Him who gave Himself for the yet unborn generations.

The young priest was imprisoned in the deep stone cellars of the timber house, and his feet and hands were bound with strips of bark. He was "as beautiful as Baldur," said the Viking's wife, and she felt pity for him, but young Helga proposed that he should be hamstrung and be tied to the tails of wild oxen.

"Then would I loose the dogs on him. Hie and away over marshes and pools! That would be a merry sight, and merrier still would it be to follow in his course."

However, this was not the death the Viking wished him to die. Instead, he intended to offer him up in the morning upon the bloodstone in the groves, as a denier and a persecutor of the great gods. It would be the first man to be sacrificed there. Young Helga begged that she

might sprinkle his blood over the images of the gods and over the people. She polished her sharp knife, and when one of the great ferocious dogs, of which there were so many about the place, sprang towards her, she dug her knife into its side, "just to test it," she said.

The Viking's wife looked sadly at this wild, badly disposed girl, and when night came and the girl's beauty of body and soul changed places, she spoke tender words of grief from her sorrowful heart. The ugly toad with its ungainly body stood fixing its sad brown eyes upon her, listening and seeming to understand with the mind of a human being.

"Never once has a word of my double grief through you passed my lips to my husband," said the Viking's wife. "My heart is full of grief for you. Great is a mother's love! But love never entered your heart; it is like a lump of cold clay. From whence did you come into my house?"

Then the ungainly creature trembled as if the words touched some invisible cord between body and soul, and great tears came into its eyes.

"A bitter time will come to you," said the Viking's wife. "And it will be a terrible one to me too! Better would it have been if as a child you had been exposed on the highway, and lulled by the cold to the sleep of death!" And the Viking's wife shed bitter tears and went away in anger and sorrow, passing under the curtain of skins which hung from the beams and divided the hall.

The shriveled-up toad crouched in the corner, and a dead silence reigned. At intervals a half stifled sigh rose within her. It was as if in anguish something came to life in her heart. She took a step forward and listened. Then she stepped forward again and grasped the heavy bar of the door with her clumsy hands. Softly she drew it back and silently lifted the latch. Then she took up the lamp which stood in the anteroom. It seemed as if a strong power gave her strength. She drew out the iron bolt from the barred cellar door and slipped in to the prisoner. He was asleep. She touched him with her cold clammy hand, and when he awoke and saw the hideous creature, he shuddered as if he beheld an evil apparition. She drew out her knife and cut his bonds asunder, and then beckoned him to follow her. He named the Holy Name and made the sign of the cross, and as the form remained unchanged, he repeated the words of the psalmist: "Blessed is the man who hath pity on the poor and needy. The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." Then he asked, "Who art thou, whose outward appearance is that of an animal, while thou willingly performest deeds of mercy?"

The toad beckoned him and led him behind the sheltering curtains and down a long passage to the stable. She pointed to a horse, onto

which he sprang and she after him. She sat in front of him, clutching the mane of the animal. The prisoner understood her and they rode at a quick pace along a path he never would have found to the heath. He forgot her hideous form, knowing that the mercy of God worked through the spirits of darkness. He prayed and sang holy songs, which made her tremble. Was it the power of prayer and his singing working upon her? Or was it the chill air of the advancing dawn? What were her feelings? She raised herself and wanted to stop and jump off the horse, but the Christian priest held her tightly with all his strength, and sang aloud a psalm as if this could lift the spell which held her.

The horse bounded on more wildly than before, the sky grew red, and the first sunbeams pierced the clouds. As the stream of light touched her the transformation took place. She was once more a lovely maiden, but her demoniac spirit was the same. The priest held a blooming maiden in his arms and he was terrified at the sight. He stopped the horse and sprang down, thinking he had met with a new device of the evil one. But young Helga sprang to the ground too. The short child's frock only reached to her knee. She tore the sharp knife from her belt and rushed upon the startled man.

"Let me get at thee!" she cried. "Let me reach thee, and my knife shall pierce thee! Thou art ashen pale, beardless slave!"

She closed upon him and they wrestled together, but an invisible power seemed to give strength to the Christian. He held her tight, and the old oak under which they stood seemed to help him, for the loosened roots above the ground tripped her up. Close by rose a bubbling spring, and he sprinkled her with water and commanded the unclean spirit to leave her, making the sign of the cross over her according to Christian usage. But the baptismal water has no power if the spring of faith flows not from within.

Yet even here something more than man's strength opposed itself through him against the evil which struggled within her. Her arms fell and she looked with astonishment and paling cheeks at this man who seemed to be a mighty magician skilled in secret arts. These were dark runes he was repeating, and cabalistic signs he was tracing in the air. She would not have blanched had he flourished a shining sword or a sharp ax before her face, but she trembled now as he traced the sign of the cross upon her forehead and bosom, and she sat before him with drooping head like a wild bird tamed.

He spoke gently to her about the deed of love she had performed for him this night, when she came in the hideous shape of a toad, cut his bands asunder, and led him out to light and life. She herself was bound, he said, and with stronger bonds than his. But she also, through him, should reach to light and life everlasting. He would take her to Hedeby

to the holy Ansgarius, and there in that Christian city the spell would be removed. But she must no longer sit in front of him on the horse, even if she went of her own free will. He dared not carry her thus.

"Thou must sit behind me, not before. Thy magic beauty has a power given by the Evil One which I dread. Yet shall I have the victory through Christ!"

He knelt down and prayed humbly and earnestly. It seemed as if the quiet wood became a holy church consecrated by his worship. The birds began to sing as if they too were also of this new congregation, and the fragrance of the wild flowers was as the ambrosial perfume of incense, while the young priest recited the words of Holy Writ: "The Day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; to guide their feet into the way of peace."

He spoke of the yearning of all nature for redemption, and while he spoke the horse which had carried them stood quietly by, only rustling among the bramble bushes, making the ripe juicy fruit fall into little Helga's hands, as if inviting her to refresh herself. Patiently she allowed herself to be lifted onto the horse's back, and she sat there like one in a trance, who neither watches nor wanders. The Christian man bound together two branches in the shape of a cross, which he held aloft in his hand as he rode through the wood.

The brushwood grew thicker and thicker till at last it became a trackless wilderness. Bushes of the wild sloe blocked the way and they had to ride round them. The bubbling springs turned to standing pools and these they also had to ride round. Still they found strength and refreshment in the pure breezes of the forest, and no less a power in the tender words of faith and love spoken by the young priest in his fervent desire to lead this poor straying one into the way of light and love.

It is said that raindrops can wear a hollow in the hardest stone, and that the waves of the sea can smooth and round the jagged rocks. So did the dew of mercy, falling upon little Helga, soften all that was hard and smooth, all that was rough in her. Not that these effects were yet to be seen. She did not even know that they had taken place, any more than the buried seed lying in the earth knows that the refreshing showers and the warm sunbeams will cause it to flourish and bloom.

As the mother's song unconsciously falls upon the child's heart, it stammers the words after her without understanding them, but later they crystallize into thoughts and in time become clear. In this way the Word also worked here in the heart of Helga.

They rode out of the wood, over a heath, and again through trackless forests. Towards evening they met a band of robbers.

"Where hast thou stolen this beautiful child?" they cried, stopping the horse and pulling down the two riders, for they were a numerous party.

The priest had no weapon but the knife which he had taken from little Helga, and with this he struck out right and left. One of the robbers raised his ax to strike him, but the Christian succeeded in springing to one side, or he would certainly have been hit. But the blade flew into the horse's neck so that the blood gushed forth and it fell to the ground dead. Then little Helga, as if roused from a long deep trance, rushed forward and threw herself onto the gasping horse. The priest placed himself in front of her as a shield and defense, but one of the robbers swung his iron club with such force at his head that the blood and the brains were scattered about, and he fell dead upon the ground.

The robbers seized little Helga by her white arms, but the sun was just going down and as the last rays vanished she was changed into the form of a frog. A greenish white mouth stretched half over her face. Her arms became thin and slimy. And broad hands with webbed fingers spread themselves out like fans. The robbers in terror let her go and she stood among them a hideous monster. Then according to frog nature, she bounded away with great leaps as high as herself and disappeared in the thicket. Then the robbers perceived that this must be Loki's evil spirit or some witchcraft, and they hurried away affrighted.

The full moon had risen and was shining in all its splendor when poor little Helga, in the form of a frog, crept out of the thicket. She stopped by the body of the Christian priest and the dead horse. She looked at them with eyes which seemed to weep. A sob came from the toad like that of a child bursting into tears. She threw herself down, first upon one and then on the other, and brought water in her hand, which from being large and webbed formed a cup. This she sprinkled them with, but they were dead, and dead they must remain! This she understood. Soon wild animals would come and devour them—but no, that should never be. So she dug into the ground as deep as she could. She wished to dig a grave for them.

She had nothing but the branch of a tree and her two hands, and she tore the web between her fingers till the blood ran from them. She soon saw that the task would be beyond her, so she fetched fresh water and washed the face of the dead man, and strewed fresh green leaves over it. She also brought large boughs to cover him and scattered dried leaves between the branches. Then she brought the heaviest stones she could carry and laid them over the dead body, filling up the spaces with moss. Now she thought the mound was strong and secure enough, but the difficult task had employed the whole night. The sun was just

rising and there stood little Helga in all her beauty, with bleeding hands and maidenly tears for the first time on her blushing cheeks.

It was in this transformation as if two natures were struggling in her. She trembled and glanced round as if she were just awakening from a troubled dream. She leaned for support against a slender beech, and at last climbed to the topmost branches like a cat and seated herself firmly upon them. She sat there for the whole livelong day, like a frightened squirrel in the solitude of the wood where all is still and dead, as they say!

Dead—well, there flew a couple of butterflies whirling round and round each other, and close by were some ant hills, each with its hundreds of busy little creatures swarming to and fro. In the air danced countless midges and swarm upon swarm of flies, ladybirds, dragonflies with golden wings, and other little winged creatures. The earthworm crept forth from the moist ground, and the moles—but excepting these, all was still and dead around. When people say this they don't quite understand what they mean. None noticed little Helga but a flock of jackdaws which flew chattering round the tree where she sat. They hopped along the branch towards her, boldly inquisitive, but a glance from her eye was enough to drive them away. They could not make her out though, any more than she could understand herself.

When the evening drew near and the sun began to sink, the approaching transformation roused her to fresh exertion. She slipped down gently from the tree, and when the last sunbeam was extinguished she sat there once more, the shriveled-up frog with her torn webbed hands. But her eyes now shone with a new beauty which they had hardly possessed in all the pride of her loveliness. These were the gentlest and tenderest maiden's eyes which now shone out of the face of the frog. They bore witness to the existence of deep feeling and a human heart, and the beauteous eyes overflowed with tears, weeping precious drops that lightened the heart.

The cross made of branches, the last work of him who now was dead and cold, still lay by the grave. Little Helga took it up—the thought came unconsciously—and she placed it between the stones which covered man and horse. At the sad recollection her tears burst forth again, and in this mood she traced the same sign in the earth round the grave. And as she formed with both hands the sign of the cross, the webbed skin fell away from her fingers like a torn glove. She washed her hands at the spring, and gazed in astonishment at their delicate whiteness. Again she made the holy sign in the air, between herself and the dead man. Her lips trembled, her tongue moved, and the name which she had so often heard in her ride through the forest rose to her lips, and she uttered the words "Jesus Christ."

The frog's skin fell away from her. She was the beautiful young maiden, but her head bent wearily and her limbs required rest. She slept, but her sleep was short. She was awakened at midnight, and before her stood the dead horse, prancing and full of life, which shone forth from his eyes and his wounded neck. Close by his side appeared the murdered Christian priest, "more beautiful than Baldur," the Viking's wife might indeed have said, and yet he was surrounded by flames of fire.

There was such earnestness in his large mild eyes, and such righteous judgment in his penetrating glance which pierced into the remotest corner of her heart. Little Helga trembled, and every memory within her was awakened as if it had been the Day of Judgment. Every kindness which had ever been shown her, every loving word which had been said to her, came vividly before her. She now understood that it was love which had sustained her in those days of trial, through which all creatures formed of dust and clay, soul and spirit, must wrestle and struggle. She acknowledged that she had but followed whither she was called, had done nothing for herself. All had been given her. She bent now in lowly humility and full of shame, before Him who could read every impulse of her heart. And in that moment she felt the purifying flame of the Holy Spirit thrill through her soul.

"Thou daughter of earth," said the Christian martyr, "out of the earth art thou come and from the earth shalt thou rise again! The sunlight within thee shall consciously return to its origin—not the beams of the actual sun, but those from God! No soul will be lost. Things temporal are full of weariness, but eternity is life-giving. I come from the land of the dead. Thou also must one day journey through the deep valleys to reach the radiant mountain summits where dwell grace and all perfections. I cannot lead thee to Hedeby for Christian baptism. First must thou break the watery shield that covers the deep morass, and bring forth from its depths the living author of thy being and thy life. Thou must first carry out thy vocation before thy consecration may take place!"

Then he lifted her up onto the horse and gave her a golden censer like those she had seen in the Viking's hall. A fragrant perfume arose from it, and the open wound on the martyr's forehead gleamed like a radiant diadem. He took the cross from the grave, holding it high above him, while they rode rapidly through the air—across the murmuring woods and over the heights where the mighty warriors of old lay buried, each seated on his dead war horse. These strong men of war arose and rode out to the summits of the mounds. The broad golden circlets round their foreheads gleamed in the moonlight and their cloaks fluttered in the wind. The great dragon hoarding his treasure raised his

head to look at them, and whole hosts of dwarfs peeped forth from their hillocks, swarming with red, green, and blue lights, like sparks from the ashes of burnt paper.

Away they flew over wood and heath, rivers and pools, up north towards the Wild Bog. Arrived here, they hovered round in great circles. The martyr raised high the cross which shone like gold, and his lips chanted the holy mass. Little Helga sang with him as a child joins in its mother's song. She swung the censer, and from it issued a fragrance of the altar so strong and so wonder-working that the reeds and rushes burst into blossom, and numberless flower stems shot up from the bottomless depths. Everything that had life within it lifted itself up and blossomed. The water lilies spread themselves over the surface of the pool like a carpet of wrought flowers, and on this carpet lay a sleeping woman. She was young and beautiful. Little Helga fancied she saw herself, her picture, mirrored in the quiet pool. It was her mother she saw, the wife of the Marsh King, the princess from the river Nile.

The martyred priest commanded the sleeping woman to be lifted up onto the horse, but the animal sank beneath the burden as though it had no more substance than a winding sheet floating on the wind. But the sign of the cross gave strength to the phantom and all three rode on through the air to dry ground. Just then the cock crew from the Viking's hall and the vision melted away in the mist which was driven along by the wind, but mother and daughter stood side by side.

"Is it myself I see reflected in the deep water?" said the mother.

"Do I see myself mirrored in a bright shield?" said the daughter. But as they approached and clasped each other heart to heart, the mother's heart beat the fastest and she understood.

"My child! My own heart's blossom! My lotus out of the deep waters!"—and she wept over her daughter. Her tears were a new baptism of love and life for little Helga.

"I came hither in a swan's plumage, and here I threw it off," said the mother. "I sank down into the bog, which closed around me. Some power always dragged me down, deeper and deeper. I felt the hand of sleep pressing upon my eyelids. I fell asleep, and I dreamt. I seemed to be again in the vast Egyptian pyramid, but still before me stood the moving alder stump which had frightened me on the surface of the bog. I gazed at the fissures of the bark and they shone out in bright colors and turned to hieroglyphs. It was the mummy's wrappings I was looking at. The coverings burst asunder and out of them walked the mummy king of a thousand years ago, black as pitch, black as the shining wood snail or the slimy mud of the swamp. Whether it were the mummy king or the Marsh King I knew not. He threw his arms

around me and I felt that I must die. When life came back to me, I felt something warm upon my bosom. It was a little bird fluttering its wing and twittering. It flew from my bosom high up towards the heavy dark canopy, but a long green ribbon still bound it to me. I heard and understood its notes of longing: 'Freedom! Sunshine! To the Father!' Then I remembered my own father in the sunlit land of my home, my life, and my love. And I loosened the ribbon and let it flutter away—home to my father. Since that hour I have dreamt no more. I must have slept a long and heavy sleep till this hour, when sweet music and fragrant odors awoke me and set me free."

Where did now the green ribbon flutter which bound the mother's heart to the wings of the bird? Only the stork had seen it. The ribbon was the green stem, the bow was the gleaming flower which cradled the little baby, now grown up to her full beauty and once more resting on her mother's breast. While they stood there pressed heart to heart, the stork was wheeling above their heads in great circles. At length he flew away to his nest and brought back the swan plumages so long cherished there. He threw one over each of them. The feathers closed over them, and mother and daughter rose into the air as two white swans.

"Now let us talk," said the father stork. "Now we can understand each other's language, even if one sort of bird has a different shaped beak from another. It is the most fortunate thing in the world that you appeared this evening. Tomorrow we should have been off, mother and I and the young ones. We are going to fly southwards. Yes, you may look at me. I am an old friend from the Nile, and so is mother, too. Her heart is not so sharp as her beak! She always said that the Princess would take care of herself. I and the young ones carried the swans' plumage up here. How delighted I am and how lucky it is that I am still here! As soon as the day dawns we will set off, a great company of storks. We will fly in front. You had better follow us, and then you won't lose your way. We will keep an eye upon you."

"And the lotus flower which I was to take with me," said the Egyptian Princess, "flies by my side in a swan's plumage. I take the flower of my heart with me, and so the riddle is solved. Now for home! home!"

But Helga said she could not leave the Danish land without seeing her loving foster mother once more, the Viking's wife. For in Helga's memory now rose up every happy recollection, every tender word, and every tear her foster mother had shed over her, and it almost seemed as if she loved this mother best.

"Yes, we must go to the Viking's hall," said the father stork. "Mother and the young ones are waiting for us there. How they will open their

eyes and flap their wings! Mother doesn't say much. She is somewhat short and abrupt, but she means very well. Now I will make a great clattering to let them know we are coming."

So he clattered with his beak, and he and the swans flew off to the Viking's hall.

They all lay in a deep sleep within. The Viking's wife had gone late to rest for she was in great anxiety about little Helga, who had not been seen for three days. She had disappeared with the Christian priest, and she must have helped him away. It was her horse which was missing from the stable. By what power had this been brought to pass? The Viking's wife thought over all the many miracles which were said to have been performed by the White Christ and by those who believed in Him and followed Him.

All these thoughts took form in her dreams, and it seemed to her that she was still awake, sitting thoughtfully upon her bed while darkness reigned without. A storm arose. She heard the rolling of the waves east and west of her from the North Sea and from the waters of the Cattegat. The monstrous serpent which, according to her faith, encompassed the earth in the depths of the ocean, was trembling in convulsions from the dread of Ragnarok, the night of the gods. He personified the Day of Judgment, when everything should pass away, even the great gods themselves. The war horn sounded, and away over the rainbow rode the gods, clad in steel, to fight their last battle. Before them flew the shield maidens, the Valkyries, and the ranks were closed by the phantoms of the dead warriors. The whole atmosphere shone in the radiance of the northern lights, but darkness conquered in the end.

It was a terrible hour, and in her dream little Helga sat close beside the frightened woman, crouching on the floor in the form of the hideous frog. She trembled and crept closer to her foster mother, who took her on her knee and in her love pressed her to her bosom, notwithstanding the hideous frog's skin. The air resounded with the clashing of sword and club and the whistling of arrows, as though a fierce hail-storm were passing over them. The hour had come when heaven and earth were to pass away, the stars to fall, and everything to succumb to Surtur's fire. And yet a new earth and a new heaven would arise, and fields of corn would wave where the seas now rolled over the golden sands. The God whom none might name would reign, and to Him would ascend Baldur the mild, the loving, redeemed from the kingdom of the dead. He was coming! The Viking's wife saw him plainly. She saw his face. It was that of the Christian priest, their prisoner.

"White Christ," she cried aloud, and as she spoke the name she pressed a kiss upon the forehead of the loathsome toad. The frog's skin

fell away, and before her stood little Helga in all the radiance of her beauty, gentle as she had never been before, and with beaming eyes. She kissed her foster mother's hands and blessed her for all the care and love she had shown in the days of her trial and misery. She thanked her for the thoughts she had instilled into her, and for naming the name which she now repeated, "White Christ!" Little Helga rose up as a great white swan and spread her wings, with the rushing sound of a flock of birds of passage on the wing.

The Viking's wife was awakened by the rushing sound of wings outside. She knew it was the time when the storks took their flight, and it was these she heard. She wanted to see them all once more and to bid them farewell, so she got up and went out onto the balcony. She saw stork upon stork sitting on the roofs of the outbuildings round the courtyard, and flocks of them were flying round and round in great circles.

Just in front of her, on the edge of the well where little Helga so often had frightened her with her wildness, sat two white swans who gazed at her with their wise eyes. Then she remembered her dream, which still seemed quite real to her. She thought of little Helga in the form of a swan. She thought of the Christian priest, and suddenly a great joy arose in her heart. The swans flapped their wings and bent their heads as if to greet her, and the Viking's wife stretched out her arms towards them as if she understood all about it, and she smiled at them with tears in her eyes.

"We are not going to wait for the swans," said the mother stork. "If they want to travel with us they must come. We can't dawdle here till the plovers start! It is very nice to travel as we do, the whole family together, not like the chaffinches and the ruffs, whose males and females fly separately. It's hardly decent! And why are those swans flapping their wings like that?"

"Well, everyone flies in his own way," said the father stork. "The swans fly in an oblique line, the cranes in the form of a triangle, and the plovers in a curved line like a snake."

"Don't talk about snakes while we are flying up here," said the mother stork. "It puts desires into the young ones' heads which they can't gratify."

"Are those the high mountains I used to hear about?" asked Helga in the swan's plumage.

"Those are thunder clouds driving along beneath us," said her mother.

"What are those white clouds that rise so high?" again inquired Helga.

"Those are mountains covered with perpetual snows that you see

yonder," said her mother, as they flew across the Alps down towards the blue Mediterranean.

"Africa's land! Egypt's strand!" said the daughter of the Nile in her joy, as from far above in her swan's plumage her eye fell upon the narrow waving yellow line, her birthplace. The other birds saw it too and hastened their flight.

"I smell the Nile mud and the frogs!" said the mother stork. "I am tingling all over. Now you will have something nice to taste, and something to see too. There are the marabouts, the ibises, and the cranes. They all belong to our family, but they are not nearly so handsome as we are. They are very stuck up too, especially the ibises, who have been so spoilt by the Egyptians. They make mummies of them and stuff them with spices. I would rather be stuffed with living frogs. And so would you, and so you shall be! Better have something in your crops while you are alive than have a great fuss made over you after you are dead. That is my opinion and I am always right."

"The storks have come back," was said in the great house on the Nile, where its lord lay in the great hall on his downy cushions covered with a leopard skin. He was scarcely alive and yet not dead either, waiting and hoping for the lotus flower from the deep morass in the north.

Relatives and servants stood round his couch, when two great white swans who had come with the storks flew into the hall. They threw off their dazzling plumage, and there stood two beautiful women as like each other as twin drops of dew. They bent over the pale withered old man, throwing back their long hair.

As little Helga bent over her grandfather, the color came back to his cheeks and new life returned to his limbs. The old man rose with health and energy renewed. His daughter and granddaughter clasped him in their arms, as if with a joyous morning greeting after a long troubled night.

Joy reigned through the house and in the storks' nest too; but there the rejoicing was chiefly over the abundance of food, especially the swarms of frogs. And while the sages hastily sketched the story of the two Princesses and the flower of healing, which brought such joy and blessing to the land, the parent storks told the same story in their own way to their family—but not until they had all satisfied their appetites, or they would have had something better to do than to listen to stories.

"Surely you will be made something at last," whispered the mother stork. "It wouldn't be reasonable otherwise."

"Oh, what should I be made?" said the father stork. "And what have I done? Nothing at all!"

"You have done more than all the others. Without you and the young ones the two Princesses would never have seen Egypt again, nor would the old man have recovered his health. You will become something. They will at least give you a doctor's degree, and our young ones will be born with the title, and their young ones after them. Why, you look like an Egyptian doctor already, at least in my eyes!"

And now the learned men and the sages set to work to propound the inner principle, as they called it, that lay at the root of the matter. "Love is the food of life," was their text. Then came the explanations. "The Princess was the warm sunbeam. She went down to the Marsh King and from their meeting sprang forth the blossom."

"I can't exactly repeat the words," said the father stork. He had been listening on the roof and now wanted to tell those in the nest all about it. "What they said was so involved and so clever that they not only received rank, but presents too. Even the head cook had a mark of distinction—most likely for the soup."

"And what did you get?" asked the mother stork. "They ought not to forget the most important person, and that is what you are. The sages have only cackled about it all. But your turn will come, no doubt."

Late at night when the whole happy household were wrapped in peaceful slumbers, there was still one watcher. It was not father stork, although he stood up in the nest on one leg like a sentry asleep at his post. No, it was little Helga. She was watching, bending out over the balcony in the clear air, gazing at the shining stars. They were bigger and purer in their radiance than she had ever seen them in the north, and yet they were the same. She thought of the Viking's wife by the Wild Bog. She thought of her foster mother's gentle eyes and the tears she had shed over the poor frog child, who now stood in the bright starlight and delicious spring air by the waters of the Nile. She thought of the love in the heathen woman's breast, the love she had lavished on a miserable creature who in human guise was a wild animal, and when in the form of an animal was hateful to the sight and to the touch. She looked at the shining stars and remembered the dazzling light on the forehead of the martyred priest as he flew over moorland and forest. The tones of his voice came back to her, and the words that he had said while she sat overwhelmed and crushed—words concerning the sublime source of love, the highest love embracing all mankind.

What had not been won and achieved by this love? Day and night little Helga was absorbed in the thought of her happiness. She entirely lost herself in the contemplation of it, like a child who turns hurriedly from the giver to examine the beautiful gifts. Happy she was indeed, and her happiness seemed ever growing. Yet more might come, would

come. In these thoughts she indulged until she thought no more of the Giver. It was in the wantonness of youth that she thus sinned. Her eyes sparkled with pride, but suddenly she was roused from her vain dream. She heard a great clatter in the courtyard below and, looking out, saw two great ostriches rushing hurriedly round in circles. Never before had she seen this great, heavy, clumsy bird which looked as if its wings had been clipped, and the birds themselves had the appearance of having been roughly used. She asked what had happened to them, and for the first time heard the legend the Egyptians tell concerning the ostrich.

Once, they say, the ostriches were a beautiful and glorious race of birds, with large strong wings. One evening the great birds of the forest said to it, "Brother, shall we tomorrow, God willing, go down to the river to drink?" And the ostrich answered, "I will."

At the break of day then they flew off, first rising high in the air towards the sun, the eye of God. Still higher and higher the ostrich flew, far in front of the other birds, in its pride flying close up to the light. He trusted in his own strength, and not on that of the Giver. He would not say "God willing!" But the avenging angel drew back the veil from the flaming ocean of sunlight, and in a moment the wings of the proud bird were burnt and he sank miserably to the earth. Since that time the ostrich and his race have never been able to rise in the air. He can only fly terror-stricken along the ground, or around and around in narrow circles. It is a warning to mankind, reminding us in every thought and action to say, "God willing!"

Helga thoughtfully and seriously bent her head and looked at the hunted ostrich. She noticed its fear and its miserable pride at the sight of its own great shadow on the white moonlit wall. Her thoughts grew graver and more earnest. A life so rich in joy had already been given her. What more was to come? The best of all perhaps—"God willing!"

Early in the spring, when the storks were again about to take flight to the north, little Helga took off her gold bracelet, scratched her name on it, beckoned to father stork, and put it round his neck. She told him to take it to the Viking's wife, who would see by it that her foster daughter still lived, was happy, and had not forgotten her.

"It is a heavy thing to carry," thought father stork, as it slipped onto his neck. "But neither gold nor honor are to be thrown upon the highway. The stork brings good luck, they say up there."

"You lay gold, and I lay eggs," said mother stork. "But you lay only once and I lay every year. Yet no one appreciates us. I call it very mortifying!"

"One always has the consciousness of one's own worth, mother," said father stork.

"But you can't hang it outside," said mother stork. "It gives neither a fair wind nor a full meal!" And they took their departure.

The little nightingale singing in the tamarind bushes was also going north soon. Helga had often heard it singing by the Wild Bog, so she determined to send a message by it too. She knew the bird language from having worn a swan's plumage, and she had kept it up by speaking to the storks and the swallows. The nightingale understood her quite well, so she begged it to fly to the beechwood in Jutland, where she had made the grave of stones and branches. She bade it tell all the other little birds to guard the grave and to sing over it. The nightingale flew away—and time flew away too.

In the autumn an eagle perched on one of the pyramids saw a gorgeous train of heavily laden camels, and men clad in armor riding fiery Arab steeds as white as silver, with quivering red nostrils and flowing manes reaching to the ground. A royal prince from Arabia, as handsome as a prince should be, was arriving at the stately mansion where now the storks' nest stood empty. Its inhabitants were still in their northern home, but they would soon return. Indeed they came on the very day when the rejoicings were at their height.

There were bridal festivities, and little Helga was the bride, clad in rich silk and many jewels. The bridegroom was the young prince from Arabia, and they sat together at the upper end of the table between her mother and her grandfather. But Helga was not looking at the bridegroom's handsome face round which his black beard curled, nor did she look into his fiery dark eyes which were fixed upon hers. She was gazing up at a brilliant twinkling star which was beaming in the heavens.

Just then there was a rustle of great wings in the air outside. The storks had come back. And the old couple, tired as they were and needing rest, flew straight down to the railing of the veranda. They knew nothing about the festivities. They had heard on the frontiers of the country that little Helga had had them painted on the wall, for they belonged to the story of her life.

"It was prettily done of her," said father stork.

"It is little enough," said mother stork. "She could hardly do less."

When Helga saw them she rose from the table and went out on to the veranda to stroke their wings. The old storks bowed their heads and the very youngest ones looked on and felt honored. And Helga looked up at the shining star, which seemed to grow brighter and purer. Between herself and the star floated a form purer even than the air, and therefore visible to her. It floated quite close to her and she saw that it was the martyred priest. He also had come to her great festival—come even from the heavenly kingdom.

"The glory and bliss yonder far outshine these earthly splendors," he said.

Little Helga prayed, more earnestly and meekly than she had ever done before, that for one single moment she might gaze into the kingdom of Heaven. Then she felt herself lifted up above the earth in a stream of sweet sounds and thoughts. The unearthly music was not only around her—it was within her. No words can express it.

"Now we must return," said the martyr, "or you will be missed."

"Only one glance more," she pleaded. "Only one short moment more."

"We must return to earth. The guests are departing."

"Only one look—the last!"

Little Helga stood once again on the veranda, but all the torches outside were extinguished and the lights in the banquet hall were out too. The storks were gone. No guests were to be seen, and no bridegroom. All had vanished in those three short minutes.

A great fear seized upon Helga. She walked through the great empty hall into the next chamber where strange warriors were sleeping. She opened a side door which led into her own room, but she found herself in a garden which had never been there before. Red gleams were in the sky, for dawn was approaching. Only three minutes in Heaven, and a whole night on earth had passed away.

Then she saw the storks. She called to them in their own language. Father stork turned his head, listened, and came up to her. "You speak our language," he said. "What do you want? Why do you come here, you strange woman?"

"It is I! It is Helga. Don't you know me? We were talking to each other in the veranda three minutes ago."

"That is a mistake," said the stork. "You must have dreamt it."

"No, no!" she said and reminded him of the Viking's stronghold, of the Wild Bog, and of their journey together.

Father stork blinked his eyes and said, "Why, that is a very old story. I believe it happened in the time of my great-great-grandmother. Yes, there certainly was a princess in Egypt who came from the Danish land, but she disappeared on her wedding night many hundreds of years ago. You may read all about it here, on the monument in the garden. There are both storks and swans carved on it, and you are at the top yourself, all in white marble."

And so it was. Helga understood all about it now and sank upon her knees.

The sun burst forth, and, as in former times, the frog's skin fell away before his beams and revealed the beautiful girl, who now, in the baptism of light, a vision of beauty brighter and purer than the air itself,

rose to, the Father. The earthly body dropped away in dust. Only a withered lotus flower lay where she had stood.

"Well, that is a new ending to the story," said father stork. "I hadn't expected that, but I like it very well."

"What will the young ones say about it?" asked mother stork.

"Ah, that is a very important matter," said father stork.

OLE SHUT-EYE

IN THE WHOLE world there is nobody who knows so many stories as Ole Shut-Eye; he can tell capital ones!

As evening comes on, when the children still sit nicely at table or on their stools, then comes Ole Shut-Eye. He comes up the stairs quite softly, for he walks in his stocking feet; he opens the door noiselessly, and st! he squirts sweet milk in the children's eyes, a small, small stream, but enough to prevent them from keeping their eyes open; and thus they cannot see him. He creeps just among them, and blows softly upon their necks, and this makes their heads heavy. O yes, but it doesn't hurt them, for Ole Shut-Eye is very fond of the children; he only wants them to be quiet, and that they are not until they are taken to bed: they are to be quiet that he may tell them stories.

When the children sleep, Ole Shut-Eye sits down upon their bed. He is well dressed: his coat is of silk, but it is impossible to say of what color, for it shines red, green, and blue, according as he turns. Under each arm he carries an umbrella: the one with pictures on it he spreads over the good children, and then they dream all night the most glorious stories; but on his other umbrella nothing at all is painted, and this he spreads over the naughty children, and these sleep in a dull way, and when they awake in the morning they have not dreamed of anything.

Now we shall hear how Ole Shut-Eye, every evening through one whole week, came to a little boy named Hjalmar, and what he told him. There are seven stories, for there are seven days in the week.

MONDAY

"Listen," said Ole Shut-Eye in the evening, when he had put Hjalmar to bed; "now I'll clear up."

And all the flowers in the flowerpots became great trees, stretching out their long branches under the ceiling of the room and along the walls, so that the whole room looked like a lovely bower; and all the

twigs were covered with flowers, and each flower was more beautiful than a rose, and smelt so sweet that one wanted to eat it; it was sweeter than jam. The fruit gleamed like gold, and there were cakes bursting with raisins. It was splendid. But at the same time a terrible wail sounded from the table drawer, where Hjalmar's schoolbook lay.

"Whatever can that be?" said Ole Shut-Eye; and he went to the table, and opened the drawer. It was the slate which was suffering from convulsions, for a wrong number had got into the sum, so that it was nearly falling in pieces; the slate pencil tugged and jumped at its string, as if it had been a little dog who wanted to help the sum, but he could not. And thus there was a great lamentation in Hjalmar's copybook; it was quite terrible to hear. On each page the great letters stood in a row, one underneath the other, and each with a little one at its side; that was the copy; and next to these were a few more letters which thought they looked just like the first; and these Hjalmar had written; but they lay down just as if they had tumbled over the pencil lines on which they were to stand.

"See, this is how you should hold yourselves," said the Copy. "Look, sloping in this way, with a powerful swing!"

"O, we should be very glad to do that," replied Hjalmar's Letters, "but we cannot; we are too weakly."

"Then you must take medicine," said Ole Shut-Eye.

"O no," cried they; and they immediately stood up so gracefully that it was beautiful to behold.

"Yes, now we cannot tell any stories," said Ole Shut-Eye; "now I must exercise them. One, two! one, two!" and thus he exercised the Letters, and they stood quite slender, and as beautiful as any copy can be. But when Ole Shut-Eye went away, and Hjalmar looked at them next morning, they were as weak and miserable as ever.

TUESDAY

As soon as Hjalmar was in bed, Ole Shut-Eye touched all the articles of furniture in the room with his little magic gun, and they immediately began to talk together, and each one spoke of itself, with the exception of the spittoon, which stood silent, and was vexed that they should be so vain as to speak only of themselves, and think only of themselves, without any regard for him who stood so modestly in the corner for every one's use.

Over the chest of drawers hung a great picture in a gilt frame—it was a landscape. One saw therein large old trees, flowers in the grass, and a broad river which flowed round about a forest, past many castles, and far out into the wide ocean.

Ole Shut-Eye touched the painting with his magic gun, and the birds began to sing, the branches of the trees stirred, and the clouds began to move across it; one could see their shadows glide over the landscape.

Now Ole Shut-Eye lifted little Hjalmar up to the frame, and put the boy's feet into the picture, just in the high grass; and there he stood; and the sun shone upon him through the branches of the trees. He ran to the water, and seated himself in a little boat which lay there; it was painted red and white, the sails gleamed like silver, and six swans, each with a gold circlet round its neck, and a bright blue star on its forehead, drew the boat past the great wood, where the trees tell of robbers and witches, and the flowers tell of the graceful little elves, and of what the butterflies have told them.

Gorgeous fishes, with scales like silver and gold, swam after their boat; sometimes they gave a spring, so that it splashed in the water; and birds, blue and red, little and great, flew after them in two long rows; the gnats danced, and the cockchafers said, "Boom! boom!" They all wanted to follow Hjalmar, and each one had a story to tell.

That was a pleasure voyage. Sometimes the forest was thick and dark, sometimes like a glorious garden full of sunlight and flowers; and there were great palaces of glass and of marble; on the balconies stood princesses, and these were all little girls whom Hjalmar knew well; he had already played with them. Each one stretched forth her hand, and held out the prettiest sugar heart which ever a cake-woman could sell; and Hjalmar took hold of each sugar heart as he passed by, and the Princess held fast, so that each of them got a piece—she the smaller share, and Hjalmar the larger. At each palace little princes stood sentry. They shouldered golden swords, and caused raisins and tin soldiers to shower down: one could see that they were real princes. Sometimes Hjalmar sailed through forests, sometimes through great halls, or through the midst of a town. He also came to the town where his nurse lived, who had carried him in her arms when he was quite a little boy, and who had always been so kind to him; and she nodded and beckoned, and sang the pretty verse she had made herself and had sent to Hjalmar—

*I think of you, so oft, so oft,
My own Hjalmar, ever dear;
I've kissed your little lips so soft,
Your forehead and your cheeks so clear.
I heard you utter your first word,
Then was I forced to say farewell;
Now will I trust you to our Lord,
A good boy here, an angel there to dwell.*

And all the birds sang too, the flowers danced on their stalks, and the old trees nodded, just as if Ole Shut-Eye had been telling stories to *them*.

WEDNESDAY

How the rain was streaming down without! Hjalmar could hear it in his sleep; and when Ole Shut-Eye opened a window, the water stood quite up to the window sill: there was quite a lake outside, and a noble ship lay close by the house.

"If thou wilt sail with me, little Hjalmar," said Ole Shut-Eye, "thou canst voyage tonight to foreign climes, and be back again tomorrow."

And Hjalmar suddenly stood in his Sunday clothes upon the glorious ship, and immediately the weather became fine, and they sailed through the streets and steered round by the church; and now everything was one great wild ocean. They sailed on until land was no longer to be seen, and they saw a number of storks, who also came from their home, and were traveling towards the hot countries: these storks flew in a row, one behind the other, and they had already flown far—far! one of them was so weary that his wings would scarcely carry him farther: he was the very last in the row, and soon remained a great way behind the rest; at last he sank, with outspread wings, deeper and deeper; he gave a few more strokes with his pinions, but it was of no use; now he touched the rigging of the ship with his feet, then he glided down from the sail, and—bump!—he stood upon the deck.

Now the cabin boy took him and put him into the hen coop with the fowls, ducks, and the turkeys; and the poor stork stood among them quite embarrassed.

"Just look at the fellow!" said all the fowls.

And the turkey cock swelled himself up as much as ever he could, and asked the stork who he was; and the ducks walked backward and quacked to each other, "Quackery! quackery!"

And the stork told them of hot Africa, of the pyramids, and of the ostrich, which runs like a wild horse through the desert; but the ducks did not understand what he said, and they said to one another—

"We're all of the same opinion, namely, that he's stupid."

"Yes, certainly he's stupid," said the turkey cock; and he gobbled.

Then the stork was quite silent, and thought of his Africa.

"Those are wonderful thin legs of yours," said the turkey cock.

"Pray, how much do they cost a yard?"

"Quack! quack! quack!" grinned all the ducks; but the stork pretended not to hear it at all.

"You may just as well laugh too," said the turkey cock to him, "for

that was very wittily said. Or was it, perhaps, too high for you? Yes, yes, he isn't very penetrating. Let us continue to be interesting among ourselves."

And then he gobbled, and the ducks quacked, "Gick! gack! gick! gack!" It was terrible how they made fun among themselves.

But Hjalmar went to the hen coop, opened the back door, and called to the stork; and the stork hopped out to him on to the deck. Now he had rested, and it seemed as if he nodded to Hjalmar, to thank him; then he spread his wings, and flew away to the warm countries; but the fowls clucked, and the ducks quacked, and the turkey cock became fiery red in the face.

"Tomorrow we shall make songs of you," said Hjalmar; and so saying he awoke, and was lying in his linen bed. It was a wonderful journey that Ole Shut-Eye had caused him to take that night.

THURSDAY

"I tell you what," said Ole Shut-Eye, "you must not be frightened. Here you shall see a little mouse," and he held out his hand with the pretty little creature in it. "It has come to invite you to a wedding. There are two little mice here who are going to enter into the marriage state tonight. They live under the floor of your mother's store closet: that is said to be a charming dwelling place!"

"But how can I get through the little mouse-hole in the floor?" asked Hjalmar.

"Let me manage that," said Ole Shut-Eye. "I will make you small."

And he touched Hjalmar with his magic gun, and the boy began to shrink and shrink, until he was not so long as a finger.

"Now you may borrow the uniform of a tin soldier: I think it would fit you, and it looks well to wear a uniform when one is in society."

"Yes, certainly," said Hjalmar.

And in a moment he was dressed like the smartest of tin soldiers.

"Will your honor not be kind enough to take a seat in your mamma's thimble?" asked the mouse. "Then I shall have the honor of drawing you."

"Will the young lady really take so much trouble?" cried Hjalmar.

And thus they drove to the mouse's wedding. First they came into a long passage beneath the boards, which was only just so high that they could drive through it in the thimble; and the whole passage was lit up with rotten wood.

"Is there not a delicious smell here?" observed the mouse. "The entire road has been greased with bacon rinds, and there can be nothing more exquisite."

Now they came into the festive hall. On the right hand stood all the little lady mice; and they whispered and giggled as if they were making fun of each other; on the left stood all the gentlemen mice, stroking their whiskers with their fore paws; and in the center of the hall the bridegroom and bride might be seen standing in a hollow cheese rind, and kissing each other terribly before all the guests; for this was the betrothal, and the marriage was to follow immediately.

More and more strangers kept flocking in. One mouse nearly trod another to death; and the happy couple had stationed themselves just in the doorway, so that one could neither come in nor go out. Like the passage, the room had been greased with bacon rinds, and that was the entire banquet; but for the dessert a pea was produced, in which a mouse belonging to the family had bitten the name of the betrothed pair—that is to say, the first letter of the name: that was something quite out of the common way.

All the mice said it was a beautiful wedding, and that the entertainment had been very agreeable. And then Hjalmar drove home again: he had really been in grand company; but he had been obliged to crawl, to make himself little, and to put on a tin soldier's uniform.

FRIDAY

"It is wonderful how many grown-up people there are who would be glad to have me!" said Ole Shut-Eye; "especially those who have done something wrong. 'Good little Ole,' they say to me, 'we cannot close our eyes, and so we lie all night and see our evil deeds, which sit on the bedstead like ugly little goblins, and throw hot water over us; will you not come and drive them away, so that we may have a good sleep?' and then they sigh deeply—'We would really be glad to pay for it. Good-night, Ole: the money lies on the window sill.' But I do nothing for money," said Ole Shut-Eye.

"What shall we do this evening?" asked Hjalmar.

"I don't know if you care to go to another wedding tonight. It is of a different kind from that of yesterday. Your sister's great doll, that looks like a man, and is called Hermann, is going to marry the doll Bertha. Moreover, it is the dolls' birthday, and therefore they will receive very many presents."

"Yes, I know that," replied Hjalmar. "Whenever the dolls want new clothes, my sister lets them either keep their birthday or celebrate a wedding; that has certainly happened a hundred times already."

"Yes, but tonight is the hundred and first wedding; and when number one hundred and one is past, it is all over; and that is why it will be so splendid. Only look!"

And Hjalmar looked at the table. There stood the little cardboard

house with the windows illuminated, and in front of it all the tin soldiers were presenting arms. The bride and bridegroom sat quite thoughtful, and with good reason, on the floor, leaning against a leg of the table. And Ole Shut-Eye, dressed up in the grandmother's black gown, married them to each other. When the ceremony was over, all the pieces of furniture struck up the following beautiful song, which the Pencil had written for them. It was sung to the melody of the soldiers' tattoo—

*Let the song swell like the rushing wind,
In honor of those who this day are joined,
Although they stand here stiff and blind,
Because they are both of a leathery kind.
Hurrah! hurrah! though they're deaf and blind,
Let the song swell like the rushing wind.*

And now they received presents—but they had declined to accept provisions of any kind, for they intended to live on love.

"Shall we now go into a summer lodging, or start on a journey?" asked the bridegroom.

And the swallow, who was a great traveler, and the old yard Hen, who had brought up five broods of chickens, were consulted on the subject. And the swallow told of the beautiful warm climes, where the grapes hung in ripe, heavy clusters, where the air is mild, and the mountains glow with colors unknown here.

"But you have not our brown cole there!" objected the Hen. "I was once in the country, with my children, in one summer that lasted five weeks. There was a sand pit, in which we could walk about and scratch; and we had the *entrée* to a garden where brown cole grew: it was so hot there that one could scarcely breathe; and then we have not all the poisonous animals that infest these warm countries of yours, and we are free from robbers. He is a villain who does not consider our country the most beautiful—he certainly does not deserve to be here!" And then the Hen wept, and went on: "I have also traveled. I rode in a coop above twelve miles; and there is no pleasure at all in traveling!"

"Yes, the Hen is a sensible woman!" said the doll Bertha. "I don't think anything of traveling among mountains, for you only have to go up, and then down again. No, we will go into the sand pit beyond the gate, and walk about in the cabbage garden."

And so it was settled.

SATURDAY

"Am I to hear some stories now?" asked little Hjalmar, as soon as Ole Shut-Eye had sent him to sleep.

"This evening we have no time for that," replied Ole Shut-Eye; and he spread his finest umbrella over the lad. "Only look at these Chinese!"

And the whole umbrella looked like a great china dish, with blue trees and pointed bridges, with little Chinese upon them, who stood there nodding their heads.

"We must have the whole world prettily decked out for tomorrow morning," said Ole Shut-Eye, "for that will be a holiday—it will be Sunday. I will go to the church steeples to see that the little church goblins are polishing the bells, that they may sound sweetly. I will go out into the field, and see if the breezes are blowing the dust from the grass and leaves; and, what is the greatest work of all, I will bring down all the stars, to polish them. I take them in my apron; but first each one must be numbered, and the holes in which they are placed up there must be numbered likewise, so that they may be placed in the same grooves again; otherwise they would not sit fast, and we should have too many shooting stars, for one after another would fall down."

"Hark ye! Do you know, Mr. Ole Shut-Eye," said an old Portrait which hung on the wall where Hjalmar slept, "I am Hjalmar's great-grandfather? I thank you for telling the boy stories; but you must not confuse his ideas. The stars cannot come down and be polished! The stars are world-orbs, just like our own earth, and that is just the good thing about them."

"I thank you, old great-grandfather," said Ole Shut-Eye, "I thank you! You are the head of the family. You are the ancestral head; but I am older than you! I am an old heathen: the Romans and Greeks called me the Dream God! I have been in the noblest houses, and am admitted there still! I know how to act with great people and with small! Now you may tell your own story!" and Ole Shut-Eye took his umbrella, and went away.

"Well, well! May one not even give an opinion nowadays?" grumbled the old Portrait. And Hjalmar awoke.

SUNDAY

"Good evening!" said Ole Shut-Eye; and Hjalmar nodded, and then ran and turned his great-grandfather's Portrait against the wall, that it might not interrupt them, as it had done yesterday.

"Now you must tell me stories; about the five green peas that lived in one shell, and about the cock's foot that paid court to the hen's foot, and of the darning needle who gave herself such airs because she thought herself a working needle."

"There may be too much of a good thing!" said Ole Shut-Eye. "You

know that I prefer showing you something. I will show you my own brother. His name, like mine, is Ole Shut-Eye, but he never comes to any one more than once; and he takes him to whom he comes upon his horse, and tells him stories. He only knows two. One of these is so exceedingly beautiful that no one in the world can imagine it, and the other so horrible that it cannot be described."

And then Ole Shut-Eye lifted little Hjalmar up to the window, and said—

"There you will see my brother, the other Ole Shut-Eye. They also call him Death! Do you see, he does not look so terrible as they make him in the picture books, where he is only a skeleton. No, that is silver embroidery that he has on his coat; that is a splendid hussar's uniform; a mantle of black velvet flies behind him over the horse. See how he gallops along!"

And Hjalmar saw how this Ole Shut-Eye rode away, and took young people as well as old upon his horse. Some of them he put before him, and some behind; but he always asked first, "How stands it with the mark book?" "Well," they all replied. "Yes, let me see it myself," he said. And then each one had to show him the book; and those who had "very well" and "remarkably well" written in their books, were placed in front of his horse, and a lovely story was told to them; while those who had "middling" or "tolerably well," had to sit up behind, and hear a very terrible story indeed. They trembled and wept, and wanted to jump off the horse, but this they could not do, for they had all, as it were, grown fast to it.

"But Death is a most splendid Ole Shut-Eye," said Hjalmar. "I am not afraid of him!"

"Nor need you be," replied Ole Shut-Eye; "but see that you have a good mark book!"

"Yes, that is improving!" muttered the great-grandfather's Picture. "It is of some use giving one's opinion." And now he was satisfied.

You see, that is the story of Ole Shut-Eye; and now he may tell you more himself, this evening!

THE WICKED PRINCE

A LEGEND

ONCE UPON a time, there was a wicked and haughty prince, whose thoughts constantly dwelt on how he might conquer all the nations of the earth, and make his name a terror to all men. He ravaged

with fire and sword; his soldiers trod down the grain in the fields; they put the torch to the peasant's cottage, so that the red flame licked the very leaves from the trees, and the fruit hung roasted from the black and singed limbs. Many a poor mother, with her naked babe, hid away behind the smoking ruins, and the soldiers sought her, and found her and the child, and then began their devilish sport: the demons of the pit could do no worse; but the Prince found it all to his liking; day by day he grew mightier, his name was feared by everybody, and good fortune came upon him to his heart's content. From the conquered cities he carried away gold and great treasure, and amassed in his capital such riches as were never before found together in one place. Then he built superb palaces, temples, and arches; and whoever saw his magnificence, exclaimed, "What a great Prince!"—never thinking of the desolation he had brought over many lands, nor listening to the groans and wailings that arose from the cities which fire had laid waste.

The Prince looked upon his gold, looked upon his superb buildings, and thought, as folks did, "What a great Prince!" "But I wish to have more, much more! No power is there that can equal, much less surpass, mine!" And so he went to war with his neighbors and subdued them all. The vanquished kings he chained to his chariot with golden chains, when he drove through the streets; and when he sat down to his table, they were made to lie at his and his courtiers' feet, and eat the morsels that might be thrown to them.

Now the Prince caused his image to be set up in the market places and in the royal palaces; he would even have set it up in the temples before the altar of the Lord; but the priests said, "Prince, thou art great, but God is greater: we dare not do it."

"Well," said the wicked Prince, "then I shall conquer Him likewise!" and in his heart's pride and folly, he built an artfully contrived ship, in which he could sail through the air; it was decked with peacocks' feathers, and seemed spangled with a thousand eyes; but each eye was a gun's mouth, and the Prince sat in the midst of the ship, and, upon his touching a certain spring, a thousand bullets would dart forth, and the guns would at once be loaded afresh. Hundreds of strong eagles were harnessed to the ship, and so it flew away, up towards the sun. The earth lay far beneath; at first it appeared, with its mountains and forests, like a plowed meadow, with a tuft of green here and there peeping out from under the upturned sod; then it resembled an unrolled map; and presently it was wholly hid in mists and clouds. Higher and higher the eagles flew; when God sent forth a single one of his countless angels, at whom the wicked Prince immediately let fly a thousand bullets; but the bullets dropped like hail from the angel's shining wings, and one drop of blood—but one—dripped from one of

the white pinions, and fell on the ship wherein sat the Prince; it burned itself fast there, and weighed with a weight of a thousand hundred-weight, and with thundering speed tore the ship down back to the earth. The eagles' strong wings were broken, the winds roared about the Prince's head; and the clouds round about, which had sprung from the smoke of the burned cities, formed themselves into terrific shapes—anon like mile-long crab-fish, reaching out their huge claws after him—anon like rolling boulders or like fiery dragons: half dead he lay in his ship, when it finally was caught in the tangled branches of a dense forest.

"I *will* conquer God!" said he; "I have vowed it, and my will shall be done!" and during seven years he builded artfully contrived vessels, in which to sail through the air, and caused thunderbolts to be forged from the hardest of steel, wherewith to batter down heaven's battlements. From all countries, he assembled vast armies, which covered many miles of ground in length and breadth, when formed in battle array. They embarked in the artfully built vessels, and already the King himself approached his; when God sent forth a swarm of gnats—one little swarm—which buzzed about the King, and stung his face and hands. In anger he drew his sword; but he beat the void air only: the gnats he could not strike. Whereupon he commanded that costly cloths be brought, and wrapped about him, so that no gnat might reach him with its sting. It was done as he had commanded; but one little gnat had lodged itself in the folds of the inmost cloth, and crept into the King's ear and stung him; the sting smarted as fire, the poison flew up into his head; he tore himself loose, flung the cloths far away, rent his garments asunder, and danced naked before the rough and savage soldiers, who now mocked the mad Prince that had set out to besiege God, and had been himself undone by one tiny gnat.

THE SNOW QUEEN

A TALE IN SEVEN STORIES

FIRST STORY

Deals with a Mirror and Its Fragments

NOW WE ARE about to begin and you must attend! And when we get to the end of the story, you will know more than you do now about a very wicked hobgoblin. He was one of the worst kind; in fact he was a real demon.

One day this demon was in a high state of delight because he had invented a mirror with this peculiarity: that every good and pretty thing reflected in it shrank away to almost nothing. On the other hand, every bad and good-for-nothing thing stood out and looked its worst. The most beautiful landscapes reflected in it looked like boiled spinach, and the best people became hideous, or else they were upside down and had no bodies. Their faces were distorted beyond recognition, and if they had even one freckle it appeared to spread all over the nose and mouth. The demon thought this immensely amusing. If a good thought passed through anyone's mind, it turned to a grin in the mirror, and this caused real delight to the demon.

All the pupils in the demon's school—for he kept a school—reported that a miracle had taken place: now for the first time, they said, it was possible to see what the world and mankind were really like. They ran about everywhere with the mirror, till at last there was not a country or a person which had not been seen in this distorting mirror. They even wanted to fly up to heaven with it to mock the angels. But the higher they flew the more it grinned, so much so that they could hardly hold it. And at last it slipped out of their hands and fell to the earth, shattered into hundreds of millions and billions of bits. Even then it did more harm than ever. Some of these bits were not as big as a grain of sand, and these flew about all over the world, getting into people's eyes. Once in, they stuck there and distorted everything they looked at, or made them see everything that was amiss. Each tiniest grain of glass kept the same power as that possessed by the whole mirror. Some people even got a bit of the glass into their hearts, and that was terrible for the heart became like a lump of ice. Some of the fragments were so big that they were used for window panes, but it was not advisable to look at one's friends through these panes. Other bits were made into spectacles, and it was a bad business when people meaning to be just put on these spectacles.

The bad demon laughed till he split his sides! It tickled him to see the mischief he had done. But some of these fragments were still left floating about the world, and you shall hear what happened to them.

SECOND STORY

About A Little Boy and A Little Girl

In a big town crowded with houses and people, where there is no room for gardens, people have to be content with flowers in pots instead. In one of these towns lived two children who managed to have

something bigger than a flowerpot for a garden. They were not brother and sister, but they were just as fond of each other as if they had been. Their parents lived opposite each other in two attic rooms. The roof of one house just touched the roof of the next one, with only a rain-water gutter between them. They each had a little dormer window, and one had only to step over the gutter to get from one house to the other.

Each of the parents had a large window box in which they grew pot herbs and a little rose tree. There was one in each box and they both grew splendidly. Then it occurred to the parents to put the boxes across the gutter, from house to house, and they looked just like two banks of flowers. The pea vines hung down over the edges of the boxes, and the roses threw out long creepers which twined round the windows. It was almost like a green triumphal arch. The boxes were high and the children knew they must not climb up onto them, but they were often allowed to have their little stools out under the rose trees; and there they had delightful games.

Of course in the winter there was an end to these amusements. The windows were often covered with hoar frost. Then they would warm copper: on the stove and stick them on the frozen panes, where they made lovely peepholes as round as possible. Then bright eyes would peep through these holes, one from each window. The little boy's name was Kay and the little girl's Gerda.

In the summer they could reach each other with one bound, but in the winter they had to go down all the stairs in one house and up all the stairs in the other, and outside there were snowdrifts.

"Look! The white bees are swarming," said the old grandmother.

"Have they a queen bee too?" asked the little boy, for he knew that there was a queen among the real bees.

"Yes, indeed they have," said the grandmother. "She flies where the swarm is thickest. She is the biggest of them all and she never remains on the ground. She always flies up again to the sky. Many a winter's night she flies through the streets and peeps in at the windows, and then the ice freezes on the panes into wonderful patterns like flowers."

"Oh yes, we have seen that," said both children, and then they knew it was true.

"Can the Snow Queen come in here?" asked the little girl.

"Just let her come," said the boy, "and I will put her on the stove, where she will melt."

But the grandmother smoothed his hair and told him more stories.

In the evening when little Kay was at home and half undressed, he crept up onto the chair by the window and peeped out of the little hole. A few snowflakes were falling, and one of these, the biggest, remained on the edge of the window box. It grew bigger and bigger, till

it became the figure of a woman dressed in the finest white gauze, which appeared to be made of millions of starry flakes. She was delicately lovely, but all ice—glittering, dazzling ice. Still she was alive. Her eyes shone like two bright stars, but there was no rest or peace in them. She nodded to the window and waved her hand. The little boy was frightened and jumped down off the chair, and then he fancied that a big bird flew past the window.

The next day was bright and frosty, and then came the thaw—and after that the spring. The sun shone, green buds began to appear, the swallows built their nests, and people began to open their windows. The little children began to play in their garden on the roof again. The roses were in splendid bloom that summer. The little girl had learned a hymn, and there was something in it about roses, and that made her think of her own. She sang it to the little boy, and then he sang it with her:

*"Where roses deck the flowery vale,
There, Infant Jesus, thee we hail!"*

The children took each other by the hands, kissed the roses and rejoiced in God's bright sunshine, and spoke to it as if the Child Jesus were there. What lovely summer days they were, and how delightful it was to sit under the fresh rose trees which seemed never to tire of blooming.

Kay and Gerda were looking at a picture book of birds and animals one day—it had just struck five by the church clock—when Kay said, "Oh! Something struck my heart and I have got something in my eye."

The little girl put her arms round his neck. He blinked his eye, but there was nothing to be seen.

"I believe it is gone," he said, but it was not gone. It was one of those very grains of glass from the mirror, the magic mirror. You remember that horrid mirror in which all good and great things reflected in it became small and mean, while the bad things were magnified and every flaw became very apparent.

Poor Kay! A grain of it had gone straight to his heart and would soon turn it to a lump of ice. He did not feel it any more but it was still there.

"Why do you cry?" he asked. "It makes you look ugly. There's nothing the matter with me. How horrid!" he suddenly cried. "There's a worm in that rose, and that one is quite crooked. After all, they are nasty roses and so are the boxes they are growing in!" He kicked the box and broke off two of the roses.

"What are you doing, Kay?" cried the little girl. When he saw her

alarm, he broke off another rose, and then ran in by his own window and left dear little Gerda alone.

When she next got out the picture book he said it was only fit for babies in long clothes. When his grandmother told them stories he always had a *but*—. And if he could manage it, he liked to get behind her chair, put on her spectacles, and imitate her. He did it very well and people laughed at him. He was soon able to imitate everyone in the street. He could make fun of all their peculiarities and failings. "He will turn out a clever fellow," said people. But it was all that bit of glass in his heart, that bit of glass in his eye, and it made him tease little Gerda who was so devoted to him. He played quite different games now; he seemed to have grown older. One winter's day when the snow was falling fast, he brought in a big magnifying glass. He held out the tail of his blue coat and let the snowflakes fall upon it.

"Now look through the glass, Gerda!" he said. Every snowflake was magnified and looked like a lovely flower or a sharply pointed star.

"Do you see how cleverly they are made?" said Kay. "Much more interesting than looking at real flowers and there is not a single flaw in them. They are perfect. If only they would not melt!"

Shortly afterwards he appeared in his thick gloves, with his sled on his back. He shouted right into Gerda's ear, "I have got leave to drive in the big square where the other boys play." And away he went.

In the big square the bolder boys used to tie their little sleds to the farm carts and go a long way in this fashion. They had no end of fun over it. Just in the middle of their games, a big sleigh came along. It was painted white and the occupant wore a white fur coat and cap. The sleigh drove twice round the square, and Kay quickly tied his sled on behind. Then off they went, faster and faster, into the next street. The driver turned round and nodded to Kay in the most friendly way, just as if they knew each other. Every time Kay wanted to loose his sled, the person nodded again and Kay stayed where he was, and they drove right out through the town gates. Then the snow began to fall so heavily that the little boy could not see a hand before him as they rushed along. He undid the cords and tried to get away from the big sleigh, but it was no use. His little sled stuck fast. And on they rushed, faster than the wind. He shouted aloud but nobody heard him, and the sleigh tore on through the snowdrifts. Every now and then it gave a bound, as if they were jumping over hedges and ditches. He was very frightened and he wanted to say his prayers, but he could only remember the multiplication tables.

The snowflakes grew bigger and bigger till at last they looked like big white chickens. All at once they sprang on one side, the big sleigh

stopped, and the person who drove got up, coat and cap smothered in snow. It was a tall and upright lady all shining white, the Snow Queen herself.

"We have come along at a good pace," she said, "but it's cold enough to kill one. Creep inside my bearskin coat."

She took him into the sleigh by her, wrapped him in her furs, and he felt as if he were sinking into a snowdrift.

"Are you still cold?" she asked and kissed him on the forehead. Ugh! It was colder than ice. It went to his very heart, which was already more than half ice. He felt as if he were dying, but only for a moment, and then it seemed to have done him good. He no longer felt the cold.

"My sled! Don't forget my sled!" He only now remembered it. It was tied to one of the white chickens which flew along behind them. The Snow Queen kissed Kay again and then he forgot all about little Gerda, Grandmother, and all the others at home.

"Now I mustn't kiss you any more," she said, "or I should kiss you to death!"

Kay looked at her and she was so pretty! A more beautiful face could hardly be imagined. She did not seem to be made of ice now, as she was when she waved her hand to him outside the window. In his eyes she was quite perfect, and he was not a bit afraid of her. He told her that he could do mental arithmetic as far as fractions, and that he knew the number of square miles and the number of inhabitants of the country. She always smiled at him, and he then thought that he surely did not know enough; and he looked up into the wide expanse of heaven, into which they rose higher and higher as she flew with him on a dark cloud, while the storm surged around them, the wind ringing in their ears like well-known old songs.

They flew over woods and lakes, over oceans and islands. The cold wind whistled down below them, the wolves howled, the black crows flew screaming over the sparkling snow. But up above, the moon shone bright and clear—and Kay looked at it all the long, long winter nights. In the day he slept at the Snow Queen's feet.

THIRD STORY

The Garden of the Woman Learned in Magic

But how was little Gerda getting on all this long time since Kay left her? Where could he be? Nobody knew. Nobody could say anything

about him. All that the other boys knew was that they had seen him tie his little sled to a splendid big one which drove away down the street and out of the town gates. Nobody knew where he was, and many tears were shed. Little Gerda cried long and bitterly. At last, people said he was dead. He must have fallen into the river which ran close by the town. Oh, what long, dark, winter days those were!

At last the spring came and the sunshine.

"Kay is dead and gone," said little Gerda.

"I don't believe it," said the sunshine.

"He is dead and gone," she said to the swallows.

"We don't believe it," said the swallows, and at last little Gerda did not believe it either.

"I will put on my new red shoes," she said one morning. "Kay never saw them. And then I will go down to the river and ask it about him."

It was very early in the morning. She kissed the old grandmother, who was still asleep, put on the red shoes, and went quite alone out by the gate to the river.

"Is it true that you have taken my little playfellow? I will give you my red shoes if you will bring him back to me again."

She thought the little ripples nodded in such a curious way that she took off her red shoes, her most cherished possessions, and threw both into the river. They fell close by the shore and were carried straight back to her by the little wavelets. It seemed as if the river would not accept her offering, as it had not taken little Kay.

She only thought she had not thrown them far enough, so she climbed into a boat which lay among the rushes. Then she went right out to the further end of it and threw the shoes into the water again. But the boat was loose and her movements started it off, and it floated away from the shore. She felt it moving and tried to get out, but before she reached the other end the boat was more than a yard from the shore and was floating away quite quickly.

Little Gerda was terribly frightened and began to cry, but nobody heard her except the sparrows. They could not carry her ashore, but they flew alongside twittering as if to cheer her, "We are here! We are here!"

The boat floated rapidly away with the current. Little Gerda sat quite still with only her stockings on. Her little red shoes floated behind but they could not catch up with the boat, which drifted away faster and faster.

The banks on both sides were very pretty with beautiful flowers, fine old trees, and slopes dotted with sheep and cattle, but not a single person.

"Perhaps the river is taking me to little Kay," thought Gerda, and that cheered her. She sat up and looked at the beautiful green banks for hours.

Then they came to a big cherry garden. There was a little house in it with curious blue and red windows. It had a thatched roof, and two wooden soldiers stood outside, who presented arms as she sailed past. Gerda called out to them. She thought they were alive, but of course they did not answer. She was quite close to them, for the current drove the boat close to the bank. Gerda called out again louder than before, and then an old, old woman came out of the house. She was leaning upon a big hooked stick, and she wore a big sun hat which was covered with beautiful painted flowers.

"You poor little child," said the old woman. "However were you driven out on this big strong river into the wide, wide world alone?" Then she walked right into the water and caught hold of the boat with her hooked stick. She drew it ashore and lifted little Gerda out.

Gerda was delighted to be on dry land again, but she was a little bit frightened by the strange old woman.

"Tell me who you are and how you got here," said she.

When Gerda had told her the whole story and asked her if she had seen Kay, the woman said she had not seen him but that she expected him. Gerda must not be sad; she was to come and taste her cherries and see her flowers, which were more beautiful than any picture book. Each one had a story to tell. Then she took Gerda by the hand, they went into the little house, and the old woman locked the door.

The windows were very high up, and they were red, blue, and yellow. They threw a very curious light into the room. On the table were quantities of the most delicious cherries, of which Gerda had leave to eat as many as ever she liked. While she was eating, the old woman combed her hair with a golden comb, so that her hair curled and shone like gold round the pretty little face, which was as sweet as a rose.

"I have long wanted a little girl like you," said the old woman. "You will see how well we shall get on together." While she combed her hair Gerda had forgotten all about Kay, for the old woman was learned in the magic art. But she was not a bad witch. She only cast spells over people for a little amusement, and she wanted to keep Gerda. She therefore went into the garden and waved her hooked stick over all the rosebushes, and however beautifully they were flowering, all sank down into the rich black earth without leaving a trace behind them. The old woman was afraid if Gerda saw the roses she would be reminded of Kay and would want to run away. Then she took Gerda into the flower garden. What a delicious scent there was! Every imaginable flower for every season was in that lovely garden. No picture book could be

brighter or more beautiful. Gerda jumped for joy and played till the sun went down behind the tall cherry trees. Then she was put into a lovely bed with rose-colored silken coverings stuffed with violets. She slept and dreamt as lovely dreams as any queen on her wedding day.

The next day she played with the flowers in the garden again—and many days passed in the same way. Gerda knew every flower, but however many there were she always thought there was one missing, but which it was she did not know.

One day she was sitting looking at the old woman's sun hat with its painted flowers, and the very prettiest one of them all was a rose. The old woman had forgotten her hat when she charmed the others away. This is the consequence of being absent-minded.

"What!" said Gerda, "are there no roses here?" And she sprang in among the flower beds and sought, but in vain. Her hot tears fell on the very places where the roses used to be. When the warm drops moistened the earth, the rose trees shot up again just as full of bloom as when they sank. Gerda embraced the roses and kissed them, and then she thought of the lovely roses at home, and this brought the thought of little Kay.

"Oh, how I have been delayed," said the little girl. "I ought to have been looking for Kay. Don't you know where he is?" she asked the roses. "Do you think he is dead and gone?"

"He is not dead," said the roses. "We have been down underground, you know, and all the dead people are there, but Kay is not among them."

"Oh, thank you!" said little Gerda. And then she went to the other flowers and looked into their cups and said, "Do you know where Kay is?"

But each flower stood in the sun and dreamt its own dreams. Little Gerda heard many of these but never anything about Kay.

And what said the tiger lilies?

"Do you hear the drum? Rub-a-dub. It has only two notes: rub-a-dub. Always the same. The wailing of women and the cry of the preacher. The Hindu woman in her long red garment stands on the pile, while the flames surround her and her dead husband. But the woman is only thinking of the living man in the circle round, whose eyes burn with a fiercer fire than that of the flames which consume the body. Do the flames of the heart die in the fire?"

"I understand nothing about that," said little Gerda.

"That is my story," said the tiger lily.

"What does the convolvulus say?"

"An old castle is perched high over a narrow mountain path. It is closely covered with ivy, almost hiding the old red walls and creeping

up leaf upon leaf right round the balcony where stands a beautiful maiden. She bends over the balustrade and looks eagerly up the road. No rose on its stem is fresher than she. No apple blossom wafted by the wind moves more lightly. Her silken robes rustle softly as she bends over and says, 'Will he never come?'

"Is it Kay you mean?" asked Gerda.

"I am only talking about my own story—my dream," answered the convolvulus.

What said the little snowdrop?

"Between two trees a rope with a board is hanging. It is a swing. Two pretty little girls in snowy frocks and green ribbons fluttering on their hats are seated on it. Their brother, who is bigger than they are, stands up behind them. He has his arms round the ropes for supports, and holds in one hand a little bowl and in the other a clay pipe. He is blowing soap bubbles. As the swing moves, the bubbles fly upwards in all their changing colors. The last one still hangs from the pipe swayed by the wind, and the swing goes on. A little black dog runs up. He is almost as light as the bubbles. He stands up on his hind legs and wants to be taken into the swing, but it does not stop. The little dog falls with an angry bark. They jeer at it. The bubble bursts. A swinging plank, a fluttering foam picture—that is my story!"

"I daresay what you tell me is very pretty, but you speak so sadly and you never mention little Kay."

What said the hyacinth?

"There were three beautiful sisters, all most delicate and quite transparent. One wore a crimson robe, the other a blue, and the third was pure white. These three danced hand in hand by the edge of the lake in the moonlight. They were human beings, not fairies of the wood. The fragrant air attracted them and they vanished into the wood. Here the fragrance was stronger still. Three coffins glide out of the wood towards the lake, and in them lie the maidens. The fireflies flutter lightly round them with their little flickering torches. Do these dancing maidens sleep, or are they dead? The scent of the flower says that they are corpses. The evening bell tolls their knell."

"You make me quite sad," said little Gerda. "Your perfume is so strong it makes me think of those dead maidens. Oh, is little Kay really dead? The roses have been down underground, and they say no."

"Ding, dong," tolled the hyacinth bells. "We are not tolling for little Kay. We know nothing about him. We sing our song, the only one we know."

And Gerda went on to the buttercups, shining among their dark green leaves.

"You are a bright little sun," said Gerda. "Tell me if you know where I shall find my playfellow."

The buttercup shone brightly and returned Gerda's glance. What song could the buttercup sing? It would not be about Kay.

"God's bright sun shone into a little court on the first day of spring. The sunbeams stole down the neighboring white wall, close to which bloomed the first yellow flower of the season. It shone like burnished gold in the sun. An old woman had brought her armchair out into the sun. Her granddaughter, a poor and pretty little maidservant, had come to pay her a short visit, and she kissed her. There was gold, heart's gold, in the kiss. Gold on the lips, gold on the ground, and gold above, in the early morning beams! Now that is my little story," said the buttercup.

"Oh, my poor old grandmother!" sighed Gerda. "She will be longing to see me and grieving about me, as she did about Kay. But I shall soon go home again and take Kay with me. It is useless for me to ask the flowers about him. They know only their own stories and have no information to give me."

Then she tucked up her little dress so that she might run the faster, but the narcissus blossoms struck her on the legs as she jumped over them. So she stopped and said, "Perhaps you can tell me something."

She stooped down close to the flower and listened. What did it say?

"I can see myself. I can see myself," said the narcissus. "Oh, how sweet is my scent. Up there in an attic window stands a little dancing girl half dressed. First she stands on one leg, then on the other, and looks as if she would tread the whole world under her feet. She is only a delusion. She pours some water out of a teapot onto a bit of stuff that she is holding. It is her bodice. 'Cleanliness is a good thing,' she says. Her white dress hangs on a peg. It has been washed in the teapot, too, and dried on the roof. She puts it on and wraps a saffron colored scarf round her neck, which makes the dress look whiter. See how high she carries her head, and all upon one stem. I see myself. I see myself."

"I don't care a bit about all that," said Gerda. "It's no use telling me such stuff."

And then she ran to the end of the garden. The door was fastened, but she pressed the rusty latch and it gave way. The door sprang open and little Gerda ran out with bare feet into the wide world. She looked back three times, but nobody came after her. At last she could run no further and she sat down on a big stone. When she looked around she saw that the summer was over. It was quite late autumn. She would never have known it inside the beautiful garden, where the sun always shone and the flowers of every season were always in bloom.

"Oh, how I have wasted my time," said little Gerda. "It is autumn. I must not rest any longer." And she got up to go on.

Oh, how weary and sore were her little feet, and everything round looked so cold and dreary. The long willow leaves were quite yellow. The damp mist fell off the trees like rain. One leaf dropped after another from the trees, and only the sloe thorn still bore its fruit, but the sloes were sour and set one's teeth on edge. Oh, how gray and sad it looked, out in the wide world!

FOURTH STORY

The Prince and the Princess

Gerda was soon obliged to rest again. A big crow hopped onto the snow, just in front of her. He had been sitting looking at her for a long time and wagging his head. Now he said "Caw! caw! Good day, good day," as well as he could. He meant to be kind to the little girl, and asked her where she was going alone in the wide world.

Gerda understood the word "alone" and knew how much there was in it, and she told the crow the whole story of her life and adventures and asked if he had seen Kay.

The crow nodded his head gravely and said, "Maybe I have. Maybe I have."

"What, do you really think you have?" cried the little girl, nearly smothering him with her kisses.

"Gently, gently!" said the crow. "I believe it may have been Kay, but he has forgotten you by this time, I expect, for the Princess."

"Does he live with a Princess?" asked Gerda.

"Yes, listen," said the crow. "But it is so difficult to speak your language. If you understand crow's language, I can tell you about it much better."

"No, I have never learned it," said Gerda. "But grandmother did and used to speak it. If only I had learned it!"

"It doesn't matter," said the crow. "I will tell you as well as I can, although I may do it rather badly."

Then he told her what he had heard.

"In this kingdom where we are now," said he, "there lives a Princess who is very clever. She has read all the newspapers in the world and forgotten them again, so clever is she. One day she was sitting on her throne, which is not such an amusing thing to do either, they say. And she began humming a tune, which happened to be:

'Why should I not be married, oh why?'

'Why not, indeed?' said she. And she made up her mind to marry, if she could find a husband who had an answer ready when a question was put to him. She called all the court ladies together, and when they heard what she wanted they were delighted.

"I like that now," they said. "I was thinking the same thing myself the other day."

"Every word I say is true," said the crow, "for I have a tame sweetheart who goes about the palace whenever she likes. She told me the story."

Of course his sweetheart was a crow, for "birds of a feather flock together," and one crow always chooses another. "The newspapers all came out immediately with borders of hearts and the Princess' initials. They gave notice that any young man who was handsome enough might go up to the palace to speak to the Princess. The one who spoke as if he were quite at home, and spoke well, would be chosen by the Princess as her husband. Yes, yes, you may believe me. It's as true as I sit here" said the crow. "The people came crowding in. There was such running and crushing, but no one was fortunate enough to be chosen, either on the first day or on the second. They could all of them talk well enough in the street, but when they entered the castle gates and saw the guard in silver uniforms, and when they went up the stairs through rows of lackeys in gold embroidered liveries, their courage forsook them. When they reached the brilliantly lighted reception rooms and stood in front of the throne where the Princess was seated, they could think of nothing to say. They only echoed her last words, and of course that was not what she wanted.

"It was just as if they had all taken some kind of sleeping powder which made them lethargic. They did not recover themselves until they got out into the street again, and then they had plenty to say. There was quite a long line of them, reaching from the town gates up to the palace.

"I went to see them myself," said the crow. "They were hungry and thirsty but they got nothing at the palace, not even as much as a glass of tepid water. Some of the wise ones had taken sandwiches with them, but they did not share them with their neighbors. They thought if the others went in to the Princess looking hungry, there would be more chance for themselves."

"But Kay, little Kay!" asked Gerda, "when did he come? Was he amongst the crowd?"

"Give me time! Give me time! We are just coming to him. It was

on the third day that a little person came marching cheerfully along, without either carriage or horse. His eyes sparkled like yours and he had beautiful long hair, but his clothes were very shabby."

"Oh, that was Kay!" said Gerda gleefully. "Then I have found him!" And she clapped her hands.

"He had a little knapsack on his back," said the crow.

"No, it must have been his sled. He had it with him when he went away," said Gerda.

"Maybe so," said the crow. "I did not look very particularly. But I know from my sweetheart that when he entered the palace gates and saw the lifeguards in the silver uniforms, and the lackeys on the stairs in their gold laced liveries, he was not the least bit abashed. He just nodded to them and said, 'It must be very tiresome to stand upon the stairs. I am going inside.' The rooms were blazing with lights. Privy councilors and excellencies without number were walking about bare-foot, carrying golden vessels. It was enough to make you solemn! His boots creaked fearfully too, but he wasn't a bit upset."

"Oh, I am sure that was Kay!" said Gerda. "I know he had a pair of new boots. I heard them creaking in grandmother's room."

"Yes, indeed they did creak!" said the crow. "But nothing daunted, he went straight up to the Princess, who was sitting on a pearl as big as a spinning wheel. Poor, simple boy! All the court ladies and their attendants, and the courtiers and their gentlemen, each attended by a page, were standing round. The nearer the door they stood, the greater was their haughtiness. The footman's boy, who always wore slippers and stood in the doorway, was almost too proud even to be looked at."

"It must be awful!" said little Gerda, "and yet Kay has won the Princess!"

"If I had not been a crow, I should have taken her myself, notwithstanding that I am engaged. They say he spoke as well as I could have done myself when I speak crow language, at least so my sweetheart says. He was a picture of good looks and gallantry, and then he had not come with any idea of wooing the Princess, but simply to hear her wisdom. He admired her just as much as she admired him."

"Indeed it was Kay then," said Gerda. "He was so clever he could do mental arithmetic up to fractions. Oh, won't you take me to the palace?"

"It's easy enough to talk," said the crow, "but how are we to manage it? I will talk to my tame sweetheart about it; she will have some advice to give us, I daresay, but I am bound to tell you that a little girl like you will never be admitted."

"Oh, indeed I shall," said Gerda. "When Kay hears that I am here, he will come out at once to fetch me."

"Wait here for me by the stile," said the crow. Then he wagged his head and flew off.

The evening had darkened in before he came back. "Caw, caw," he said. "She sends you greeting, and here is a little roll for you. She got it out of the kitchen, where there is bread enough, and I daresay you are hungry. It is not possible for you to get into the palace. You have bare feet and the guards in silver and the lackeys in gold would never allow you to pass. But don't cry. We shall get you in somehow. My sweetheart knows a little back staircase which leads up to the bedroom, and she knows where the key is kept."

Then they went quietly into the garden, into the great avenue where the trees were. And when the palace lights went out one after the other, the crow led little Gerda to the back door, which was ajar.

Oh, how Gerda's heart beat with fear and longing! It was just as if she were about to do something wrong, and yet she only wanted to know if this really was little Kay. Oh, it must be he, she thought, picturing to herself his clever eyes and his long hair. She could see his very smile when they used to sit under the rose trees at home. She thought he would be very glad to see her and to hear what a long way she had come to find him, and to hear how sad they had all been at home when he did not come back. Oh, it was joy mingled with fear.

They had now reached the stairs, where a little lamp was burning on a shelf. There stood the tame sweetheart, twisting and turning her head to look at Gerda, who made a curtsy, as grandmother had taught her.

"My betrothed has spoken so charmingly to me about you, my little miss," she said. "Your life, '*Vita*,' as it is called, is most touching! If you will take the lamp, I will go on in front. We shall take the straight road here and we shall meet no one."

"It seems to me that someone is coming up behind us," said Gerda, as she fancied something rushed past her throwing a shadow on the walls: horses with flowing manes and slender legs; huntsmen, ladies and gentlemen, on horseback.

"Oh, those are only the dreams!" said the crow. "They come to take the thoughts of the noble ladies and gentlemen out hunting. That's a good thing, for you will be able to see them all the better in bed. But don't forget, when you are taken into favor, that you show a grateful spirit."

"Now, there's no need to talk about that," said the crow from the woods.

They now came into the first apartment; it was hung with rose-colored satin embroidered with flowers. Here again the dreams overtook them, but they flitted by so quickly that Gerda could not distinguish

them. The apartments became one more beautiful than the other. There were enough to bewilder anybody. They now reached the bedroom. The ceiling was like a great palm with crystal leaves, and in the middle of the room were two beds, each like a lily hung from a golden stem. One was white, and in it lay the Princess. The other was red, and there lay he whom Gerda had come to seek—little Kay! She bent aside one of the crimson leaves, and she saw a little brown neck. It was Kay! She called his name aloud and held the lamp close to him. Again the dreams rushed through the room on horseback. He awoke, turned his head—and it was not little Kay.

It was only the Prince's neck which was like his, but he was young and handsome. The Princess peeped out of her lily-white bed and asked what was the matter. Then little Gerda cried and told them all her story, and what the crows had done to help her.

"You poor little thing!" said the Prince and Princess. And they praised the crows and said that they were not at all angry with them, but they must not do it again. Then they gave them a reward.

"Would you like your liberty?" said the Princess. "Or would you prefer permanent posts about the court as court crows with perquisites from the kitchen?"

Both crows curtsied and begged for the permanent posts. They thought of their old age and said it would be good to have something for "the old man," as they called it.

The Prince got up and allowed Gerda to sleep in his bed, and he could not have done more. She folded her little hands and thought, "How good the people and the animals are!" Then she shut her eyes and fell fast asleep. All the dreams came flying back again. This time they looked like angels, and they were dragging a little sled with Kay sitting on it, and he nodded. But it was only a dream, so it all vanished when she woke.

Next day she was dressed in silk and velvet from head to foot. They asked her to stay at the palace and have a good time, but she only begged them to give her a little carriage and horse and a little pair of boots, so that she might drive out into the wide world to look for Kay.

They gave her a pair of boots and a muff. She was beautifully dressed, and when she was ready to start, there before the door stood a new chariot of pure gold. The Prince's and Princess' coat of arms were emblazoned on it and shone like a star. Coachman, footman, and outrider, for there was even an outrider, all wore golden crowns. The Prince and Princess themselves helped her into the carriage and wished her joy. The wood crow, who was now married, accompanied her for the first three miles. He sat beside Gerda, for he could not ride with

his back to the horses. The other crow stood at the door and flapped her wings. She did not go with them, for she suffered from headache since she had been a kitchen pensioner—the consequence of eating too much. The chariot was stored with sugar biscuits, and there were fruit and ginger nuts under the seat.

"Good-by! good-by!" cried the Prince and Princess. Little Gerda wept and the crow wept too. At the end of the first few miles the crow said good-by, and this was the hardest parting of all. He flew up into a tree and flapped his big black wings as long as he could see the chariot, which shone like the brightest sunshine.

FIFTH STORY

The Little Robber Girl

They drove on through a dark wood, where the chariot lighted the way and blinded some robbers by its glare. It was more than they could bear.

"It is gold! It is gold!" they cried, and darting forward they seized the horses and killed the postilions, the coachman, and footman. Then they dragged little Gerda out of the carriage.

"She is fat and she is pretty! She has been fattened on nuts," said the old robber woman, who had a long beard, and eyebrows that hung down over her eyes. "She is as good as a fat lamb, and how nice she will taste!" She drew out her sharp knife as she said this. It glittered horribly. "Oh!" screamed the old woman at the same moment, for her little daughter had come up behind her and was biting her ear. She hung on her back, as wild and as savage a little animal as you could wish to find. "You bad, wicked child!" said the mother, but she was prevented from killing Gerda on this occasion.

"She shall play with me," said the little robber girl. "She shall give me her muff and her pretty dress, and she shall sleep in my bed." Then she bit her mother again and made her dance. All the robbers laughed and said, "Look at her dancing with her cub!"

"I want to get into the carriage," said the little robber girl, and she always had her own way because she was so spoilt and stubborn. She and Gerda got into the carriage, and then they drove over stubble and stones further and further into the wood. The little robber girl was as big as Gerda, but much stronger. She had broad shoulders and a darker skin. Her eyes were quite black, with almost a melancholy expression. She put her arm round Gerda's waist and said, "They shan't kill you

as long as I don't get angry with you. You must surely be a Princess!"

"No," said little Gerda, and then she told her all her adventures and how fond she was of Kay.

The robber girl looked earnestly at her, gave a little nod, and said, "They shan't kill you even if I am angry with you. I will do it myself." Then she dried Gerda's eyes and stuck her own hands into the pretty muff, which was so soft and warm.

At last the chariot stopped. They were in the courtyard of a robber's castle, the walls of which were cracked from top to bottom. Ravens and crows flew in and out of every hole, and big bulldogs, each of whom looked ready to devour somebody, jumped as high as they could. But they did not bark, for it was not allowed. A big fire was burning in the middle of the stone floor of the smoky old hall. The smoke all went up to the ceiling where it had to find a way out for itself. Soup was boiling in a big caldron over the fire, and hares and rabbits were roasting on the spits.

"You shall sleep with me and all my little pets tonight," said the robber girl.

When they had had something to eat and drink they went along to one corner which was spread with straw and rugs. There were nearly a hundred pigeons roosting overhead on the rafters and beams. They seemed to be asleep, but they fluttered about a little when the children came in.

"They are all mine," said the little robber girl, seizing one of the nearest. She held it by the legs and shook it until it flapped its wings. "Kiss it," she cried, dashing it at Gerda's face. "Those are the wood pigeons," she added, pointing to some laths fixed across a big hole high up on the walls. "They are a regular rabble. They would fly away directly if they were not locked in. And here is my old sweetheart, Be!" Here she dragged forward a reindeer by the horn. He was tied up, and he had a bright copper ring round his neck. "We have to keep him close too, or he would run off. Every single night I tickle his neck with my bright knife. He is so frightened of it!" The little girl produced a long knife out of a hole in the wall and drew it across the reindeer's neck. The poor animal laughed and kicked, and the robber girl laughed and pulled Gerda down into the bed with her.

"Do you have that knife by you while you are asleep?" asked Gerda, looking rather frightened.

"I always sleep with a knife," said the little robber girl. "You never know what will happen. But now tell me again what you told me before about little Kay, and why you went out into the world."

So Gerda told her all about it again, and the wood pigeons cooed up

in their cage above them. The other pigeons were asleep. The little robber girl put her arm round Gerda's neck and went to sleep with the knife in her other hand, and she was soon snoring. But Gerda would not close her eyes. She did not know whether she was to live or to die. The robbers sat round the fire, eating and drinking, and the old woman was turning somersaults. This sight terrified the poor little girl.

Then the wood pigeons said, "Coo, coo! We have seen little Kay. His sled was drawn by a white chicken, and he was sitting in the Snow Queen's sleigh. It was floating low over the trees, while we were in our nests. She blew upon us young ones, and they all died except us two. Coo, coo."

"What are you saying up there?" asked Gerda. "Where was the Snow Queen going? Do you know anything about it?"

"She was most likely going to Lapland, because there is always snow and ice there. Ask the reindeer who is tied up below."

"There is ice and snow, and it's a splendid place," said the reindeer. "You can run and jump about where you like on those big glittering plains. The Snow Queen has her summer tent there, but her permanent castle is up at the North Pole, on the island which is called Spitzbergen."

"Oh Kay, little Kay!" sighed Gerda.

"Lie still, or I shall stick the knife into you," said the robber girl.

In the morning Gerda told her all that the wood pigeons had said, and the little robber girl looked quite solemn, but she nodded her head and said, "No matter! No matter! Do you know where Lapland is?" she asked the reindeer.

"Who should know better than I," said the animal, his eyes dancing. "I was born and brought up there, and I used to leap about on the snowfields."

"Listen," said the robber girl. "You see that all our men folks are away, but mother is still here and she will stay. But later on in the morning she will take a drink out of the big bottle there, and after that she will have a nap. Then I will do something for you." Then she jumped out of bed, ran along to her mother and pulled her beard, and said, "Good morning, my own dear nanny goat!" And her mother filiped her nose till it was red and blue, but it was all affection.

As soon as her mother had had her draught from the bottle and had dropped asleep, the little robber girl went along to the reindeer and said, "I should have the greatest pleasure in the world in keeping you here, to tickle you with my knife, because you are such fun then. However, it does not matter. I will untie your halter and help you outside so that you may run away to Lapland, but you must put your best foot

foremost and take this little girl for me to the Snow Queen's palace, where her playfellow is. I suppose you heard what she was telling me, for she spoke loudly enough and you are generally eavesdropping."

The reindeer jumped up into the air for joy. The robber girl lifted little Gerda up, and had the forethought to tie her on, nay, even to give her a little cushion to sit upon. "Here, after all, I will give you your fur boots back, for it will be very cold, but I will keep your muff. It is too pretty to part with. Still you shan't be cold. Here are my mother's big mittens, for you. They will reach up to your elbows. Here, stick your hands in! Now your hands look just like my nasty mother's."

Gerda shed tears of joy.

"I don't like you to whimper!" said the little robber girl. "You ought to be looking delighted. And here are two loaves and a ham for you so that you will not starve."

These things were tied onto the back of the reindeer. The little robber girl opened the door and called in all the big dogs, and then she cut the halter with her knife and said to the reindeer, "Now run, but take care of my little girl!"

Gerda stretched out her hands in the big mittens to the robber girl and said good-by. And then the reindeer darted off over briars and bushes, through the big wood, over swamps and plains, as fast as he could go. The wolves howled and the ravens screamed, while the red lights quivered up in the sky.

"There are my old northern lights," said the reindeer. "See how they flash!" And on he rushed faster than ever, day and night. The loaves were eaten, and the ham too, and then they were in Lapland.

SIXTH STORY

The Lapp Woman and the Finn Woman

They stopped by a little hut, a very poverty-stricken one. The roof sloped right down to the ground, and the door was so low that the people had to creep on hands and knees when they wanted to go in or out. There was nobody at home here but an old Lapp woman who was frying fish over a whale-oil lamp. The reindeer told her all Gerda's story, but he told his own first, for he thought his much the most important. Gerda was so overcome by the cold that she could not speak at all.

"Oh, you poor creatures!" said the Lapp woman. "You've got a long way to go yet. You will have to go hundreds of miles into the Finmark, for the Snow Queen is paying a country visit there, and she burns blue lights every night: I will write a few words on a dried codfish, for I

have no paper. I will give it to you to take to the Finn woman up there. She will be better able to direct you than I can."

So when Gerda was warmed and had eaten and drunk something, the Lapp woman wrote a few words on a dried codfish and gave it to her, bidding her take good care of it. Then she tied her onto the reindeer again and off they flew. Flicker, flicker, went the beautiful blue northern lights up in the sky all night long. At last they came to the Finmark, and knocked on the Finn woman's chimney, for she had no door at all.

There was such a heat inside that the Finn woman went about almost naked. She was little and very grubby. She at once loosened Gerda's things and took off the mittens and the boots, or she would have been too hot. Then she put a piece of ice on the reindeer's head, and after that she read what was written on the codfish. She read it three times, and then she knew it by heart, and put the fish into the pot for dinner. There was no reason why it should not be eaten, and she never wasted anything.

Again the reindeer told his own story first and then little Gerda's. The Finn woman blinked with her wise eyes but she said nothing.

"You are so clever," said the reindeer. "I know you can bind all the winds of the world with a bit of sewing cotton. When a skipper unties one knot, he gets a good wind. When he unties two, it blows hard. And if he undoes the third and the fourth, he brings a storm about his head wild enough to blow down the forest trees. Won't you give the little girl a drink, so that she may have the strength of twelve men to overcome the Snow Queen?"

"The strength of twelve men?" said the Finn woman. "Yes, that will be about enough."

She went along to a shelf and took down a big folded skin, which she unrolled. There were curious characters written on it, and the Finn woman read till the perspiration poured down her forehead.

But the reindeer implored her to give Gerda something, and Gerda looked at her with such beseeching eyes, full of tears, that the Finn woman began blinking again and drew the reindeer into a corner, where she whispered to him, at the same time putting fresh ice on his head.

"Little Kay is certainly with the Snow Queen, and he is delighted with everything there. He thinks it is the best place in the world, but that is because he has got a splinter of glass in his heart and a grain of glass in his eye. They will have to come out first, or he will never be human again, and the Snow Queen will keep him in her power."

"But can't you give little Gerda something to take which will give her power to conquer it all?"

"I can't give her greater power than she already has. Don't you see how great it is? Don't you see how both man and beast have to serve her? How she has got on as well as she has on her bare feet? We must not tell her what power she has. It is in her heart, because she is such a sweet innocent child. If she can't reach the Snow Queen herself, then we can't help her. The Snow Queen's gardens begin just two miles from here. You can carry the little girl as far as that. Put her down by the big bush standing there in the snow covered with red berries. Don't stand gossiping, but hurry back to me!" Then the Finn woman lifted Gerda onto the reindeer's back, and he rushed off as hard as he could.

"Oh, I have not got my boots, and I have not got my mittens!" cried little Gerda.

She soon felt the want of them in that cutting wind, but the reindeer did not dare to stop. He ran on till he came to the bush with the red berries. There he put Gerda down and kissed her on the mouth, while big shining tears trickled down his face. Then he ran back again as fast as ever he could. There stood poor little Gerda without shoes or gloves, in the middle of the freezing icebound Finmark.

She ran forward as quickly as she could. A whole regiment of snowflakes came towards her. They did not fall from the sky, for it was quite clear, with the northern lights shining brightly. No. These snowflakes ran along the ground, and the nearer they came the bigger they grew. Gerda remembered well how big and strange they looked under the magnifying glass. But the size of these was monstrous! They were alive. They were the Snow Queen's advance guard, and they took the most curious shapes. Some looked like big, horrid porcupines; some like bundles of knotted snakes with their heads sticking out. Others again were like fat little bears with bristling hair, but all were dazzling white and living snowflakes.

Then little Gerda said the Lord's Prayer, and the cold was so great that her breath froze as it came out of her mouth, and she could see it like a cloud of smoke in front of her. It grew thicker and thicker till it formed itself into bright little angels who grew bigger and bigger when they touched the ground. They all wore helmets and carried shields and spears in their hands. More and more of them appeared, and when Gerda had finished her prayer she was surrounded by a whole legion. They pierced the snowflakes with their spears and shivered them into a hundred pieces, and little Gerda walked fearlessly and undauntedly through them. The angels touched her hands and her feet, and then she hardly felt how cold it was but walked quickly on towards the Palace of the Snow Queen.

Now we must see what Kay was about. He was not thinking about Gerda at all—least of all that she was just outside the Palace.

SEVENTH STORY

*What Happened in the Snow Queen's Palace
and Afterwards*

The palace walls were made of drifted snow, and the windows and doors of the biting winds. There were over a hundred rooms in it, shaped just as the snow had drifted. The biggest one stretched for many miles. They were all lighted by the strongest northern lights, and were immensely big and empty, and glittering in their iciness. There was never any gaiety in them, not even so much as a ball for the little bears, when the storms might have tuned up as the orchestra, and the polar bears might have walked about on their hind legs and shown off their grand manners. There was never even a little game-playing party for such games as "touch last" or "the biter bit"—no, not even a little gossip over the coffee cups for the white fox misses.

Immense, vast, and cold were the Snow Queen's halls. The northern lights came and went with such regularity that you could count the seconds between their coming and going. In the midst of these never-ending snow halls was a frozen lake. It was broken up on the surface into a thousand bits, but each piece was so exactly like the others that the whole formed a perfect work of art. The Snow Queen sat in the very middle of it when she sat at home. She then said that she was sitting on "The Mirror of Reason," and that it was the best and only one in the world.

Little Kay was blue with cold—nay, almost black—but he did not know it, for the Snow Queen had kissed away the icy shiverings, and his heart was little better than a lump of ice. He went about dragging some sharp flat pieces of ice which he placed in all sorts of patterns, trying to make something out of them, just as when we at home have little tablets of wood, with which we make patterns and call them a "Chinese puzzle."

Kay's patterns were most ingenious, because they were the "Ice Puzzles of Reason." In his eyes they were excellent and of the greatest importance: this was because of the grain of glass still in his eye. He made many patterns forming words, but he never could find the right way to place them for one particular word, a word he was most anxious to make. It was "Eternity." The Snow Queen had said to him that if he could find out this word he should be his own master, and she would give him the whole world and a new pair of skates. But he could not discover it.

"Now I am going to fly away to the warm countries," said the Snow Queen. "I want to go and peep into the black caldrons." She meant the volcanoes Etna and Vesuvius. "I must whiten them a little. It does them good, and the lemons and the grapes too!" And away she flew.

Kay sat quite alone in all those many miles of empty ice halls. He looked at his bits of ice and thought and thought, till something gave way within him. He sat so stiff and immovable that one might have thought he was frozen to death.

Then it was, that little Gerda walked into the palace, through the great gates in a biting wind. She said her evening prayer, and the wind dropped as if lulled to sleep, and she walked on into the big empty hall. She saw Kay and knew him at once. She flung her arms round his neck, held him fast, and cried, "Kay, little Kay, have I found you at last?"

But he sat still, rigid and cold.

Then little Gerda shed hot tears. They fell upon his breast and penetrated to his heart. Here they thawed the lump of ice and melted the little bit of the mirror which was in it. He looked at her, and she sang:

*"Where roses deck the flowery vale,
There, Infant Jesus, thee we hail!"*

Then Kay burst into tears. He cried so much that the grain of glass was washed out of his eye. He knew her and shouted with joy, "Gerda! Dear little Gerda! Where have you been for such a long time? And where have I been?" He looked round and said, "How cold it is here! How empty and vast!"

He kept tight hold of Gerda, who laughed and cried for joy. Their happiness was so heavenly that even the bits of ice danced for joy around them. And when they settled down, there they lay in just the very position the Snow Queen had told Kay he must find out, if he was to become his own master and have the whole world and a new pair of skates.

Gerda kissed his cheeks and they grew rosy. She kissed his eyes and they shone like hers. She kissed his hands and his feet and he became well and strong. The Snow Queen might come home whenever she liked; his order of release was written there in shining letters of ice.

They took hold of each other's hands and wandered out of the big palace. They talked about grandmother and about the roses upon the roof. Wherever they went, the winds lay still and the sun broke through the clouds. When they reached the bush with the red berries, they found the reindeer waiting for them, and he had brought another young reindeer with him whose udders were full. The children drank her warm milk and kissed her on the mouth. Then they carried Kay and

Gerda, first to the Finn woman, in whose heated hut they warmed themselves and received directions about the homeward journey. Then they went to the Lapp woman. She had made new clothes for them and prepared her sled. Both the reindeer ran by their side to the boundaries of the country. Here the first green buds appeared, and they said "Good-by" to the reindeer and the Lapp woman. They heard the first little birds twittering and saw the buds in the forest. Out of it came riding a young girl on a beautiful horse which Gerda knew, for it had drawn the golden chariot. She had a scarlet cap on her head and pistols in her belt. It was the little robber girl, who had tired of staying at home. She was riding northwards to see how she liked it before she tried some other part of the world. She knew them again, and Gerda recognized her with delight.

"You are a nice fellow to go tramping off!" she said to little Kay. "I should like to know if you deserve to have somebody running to the end of the world for your sake."

But Gerda patted her cheek and asked about the Prince and Princess.

"They are traveling in foreign countries," said the robber girl.

"But the crow?" asked Gerda.

"Oh, the crow is dead," she answered. "The tame sweetheart is a widow and goes about with a bit of black wool tied round her leg. She pities herself bitterly, but it's all nonsense! But tell me how you got on yourself, and where you found him."

Gerda and Kay both told her all about it.

"Snip, snap, snur-r! It's all right at last then!" she said. And she took hold of their hands and promised that if she ever passed through their town she would pay them a visit. Then she rode off into the wide world. But Kay and Gerda walked on, hand in hand, and wherever they went they found the most delightful spring and blooming flowers. Soon they recognized the big town where they lived, with its tall towers in which the bells still rang their merry peals. They went straight on to Grandmother's door, up the stairs, and into her room.

Everything was just as they had left it. The old clock ticked in the corner, and the hands pointed to the time. As they went through the door into the room, they perceived that they were grown up. The roses clustered round the open window, and there stood their two little chairs. Kay and Gerda sat down upon them, still holding each other by the hand. All the cold empty grandeur of the Snow Queen's palace had passed from their memory like a bad dream. Grandmother sat in God's warm sunshine reading from her Bible.

"Without ye become as little children ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

Kay and Gerda looked into each other's eyes, and then all at once the meaning of the old hymn came to them:

*"Where roses deck the flowery vale,
There, Infant Jesus, thee we hail!"*

And there they both sat, grown up and yet children, children at heart. And it was summer—warm, beautiful summer.

PEN AND INKSTAND

THE FOLLOWING remark was made in a poet's room, as the speaker looked at the inkstand that stood upon his table—

"It is marvelous all that can come out of that inkstand! What will it produce next? Yes, it is marvelous!"

"So it is!" exclaimed the inkstand. "It is incomprehensible! That is what I always say." It was thus the inkstand addressed itself to the pen, and to everything else that could hear it on the table. "It is really astonishing all that can come from me! It is almost incredible! I positively do not know myself what the next thing may be, when a person begins to dip into me. One drop of me serves for half a side of paper; and what may not then appear upon it? I am certainly something extraordinary. From me proceed all the works of the poets. These animated beings, whom people think they recognize—these deep feelings, that gay humor, these charming descriptions of nature—I do not understand them myself, for I know nothing about nature; but still it is all in me. From me have gone forth, and still go forth, these warrior hosts, these lovely maidens, these bold knights on snorting steeds, those droll characters in humbler life. The fact is, however, that I do not know anything about them myself. I assure you they are not my ideas."

"You are right there," replied the pen. "You have few ideas, and do not trouble yourself much with thinking. If you *did* exert yourself to think, you would perceive that you ought to give something that was not dry. You supply me with the means of committing to paper what I have in me; I write with that. It is the pen that writes. Mankind do not doubt that; and most men have about as much genius for poetry as an old inkstand."

"You have but little experience," said the inkstand. "You have scarcely been a week in use, and you are already half worn out. Do you fancy that you are a poet? You are only a servant; and I have had many of your kind before you came—many of the goose family, and of

English manufacture. I know both quill pens and steel pens. I have had a great many in my service, and I shall have many more still, when he, the man who stirs me up, comes and puts down what he takes from me. I should like very much to know what will be the next thing he will take from me."

"Ink tub!" said the pen.

Late in the evening the poet returned home. He had been at a concert, had heard a celebrated violin player, and was quite enchanted with his wonderful performance. It had been a complete gush of melody that he had drawn from the instrument. Sometimes it seemed like the gentle murmur of a rippling stream, sometimes like the singing of birds, sometimes like the tempest sweeping through the mighty pine forests. He fancied he heard his own heart weep, but in the sweet tones that can be heard in a woman's charming voice. It seemed as if not only the strings of the violin made music, but its bridge, its pegs, and its sounding board. It was astonishing! The piece had been a most difficult one; but it seemed like play—as if the bow were but wandering capriciously over the strings. Such was the appearance of facility, that every one might have supposed he could do it. The violin seemed to sound of itself, the bow to play of itself. These two seemed to do it all. One forgot the master who guided them, who gave them life and soul. Yes, they forgot the master; but the poet thought of him. He named him, and wrote down his thoughts as follows—

"How foolish it would be of the violin and the bow, were they to be vain of their performance! And yet this is what so often we of the human species are. Poets, artists, those who make discoveries in science, military and naval commanders—we are all proud of ourselves; and yet we are all only the instruments in our Lord's hands. To Him alone be the glory! We have nothing to arrogate to ourselves."

This was what the poet wrote; and he headed it with, "The Master and the Instruments."

"Well, madam," said the pen to the inkstand when they were again alone, "you heard him read aloud what I had written."

"Yes, what I gave you to write," said the inkstand. "It was a hit at you for your conceit. Strange that you cannot see that people make a fool of you! I gave you that hit pretty cleverly. I confess, though, it was rather malicious."

"Ink holder!" cried the pen.

"Writing stick!" cried the inkstand.

They both felt assured that they had answered well; and it is a pleasant reflection that one has made a smart reply—one sleeps comfortably after it. And they both went to sleep; but the poet could not sleep. His thoughts welled forth like the tones from the violin, trilling

like pearls, rushing like a storm through the forest. He recognized the feelings of his own heart—he perceived the gleam from the everlasting Master.

To Him alone be the glory!

GREAT CLAUS AND LITTLE CLAUS

IN A VILLAGE there once lived two men of the selfsame name. They were both called Claus, but one of them had four horses and the other had only one. So to distinguish them, people called the owner of the four horses "Great Claus," and he who had only one horse was called "Little Claus." Now I shall tell you what happened to them, for this is a true story.

Throughout the week Little Claus was obliged to plow for Great Claus and to lend him his one horse, but once a week—on Sunday—Great Claus lent him all his four horses. How proudly each Sunday Little Claus would smack his whip over all five, for they were as good as his own on that one day.

The sun shone brightly and the church bells rang merrily as the people passed by, dressed in their best and with their prayer books under their arms. They were going to hear the parson preach. They looked at Little Claus plowing with his five horses, and he was so proud that he smacked his whip and said, "Gee-up, my five horses."

"You mustn't say that," said Great Claus, "for only one of them is yours."

But Little Claus soon forgot what he ought not to say, and when anyone passed he would call out, "Gee-up, my five horses."

"I must really beg you not to say that again," said Great Claus. "If you do, I shall hit your horse on the head so that he will drop down dead on the spot. And that will be the end of him."

"I promise you I will not say it again," said the other. But as soon as anybody came by nodding to him and wishing him "Good day," he was so pleased and thought how grand it was to have five horses plowing in his field that he cried out again, "Gee-up, all my horses!"

"I'll gee-up your horses for you," said Great Claus. And seizing the tethering mallet he struck Little Claus's one horse on the head, and it fell down dead.

"Oh, now I have no horse at all," said Little Claus, weeping. But after a while he flayed the dead horse and hung the skin in the wind to dry.

Then he put the dried skin into a bag, hung it over his shoulder, and went off to the next town to sell it. But he had a long way to go and had to pass through a dark and gloomy forest.

Presently a storm arose and he lost his way. And before he discovered the right path, evening was drawing on, and it was still a long way to the town and too far to return home before nightfall.

Near the road stood a large farmhouse. The shutters outside the windows were closed, but lights shone through the crevices and at the top. "They might let me stay here for the night," thought Little Claus, so he went up to the door and knocked.

The farmer's wife opened the door, but when she heard what he wanted she told him to go away. Her husband was not at home and she could not let any strangers in.

"Then I shall have to lie out here," said Little Claus to himself, as the farmer's wife shut the door in his face.

Close to the farmhouse stood a large haystack, and between it and the house there was a small shed with a thatched roof. "I can lie up there," said Little Claus, as he saw the roof. "It will make a famous bed, but I hope the stork won't fly down and bite my legs." A live stork who had his nest on the roof was standing up there.

So Little Claus climbed on to the roof of the shed. And as he turned about to make himself comfortable, he discovered that the wooden shutters did not reach to the top of the windows. He could see into the room, in which a large table was laid out with wine, roast meat, and a splendid fish. The farmer's wife and the sexton were sitting at table together. Nobody else was there. She was filling his glass and helping him plentifully to fish, which appeared to be his favorite dish.

"If only I could have some too," thought Little Claus. Then he stretched out his neck towards the window and spied a beautiful large cake. Indeed, they had a glorious feast before them.

At that moment he heard someone riding down the road towards the farm. It was the farmer coming home.

He was a good man but he had one very strange prejudice—he could not bear the sight of a sexton. If he happened to see one, he would get into a terrible rage. Because of this dislike, the sexton had gone to visit the farmer's wife during her husband's absence from home, and the good woman had put before him the best of everything she had in the house to eat.

When they heard the farmer they were dreadfully frightened, and the woman made the sexton creep into a large chest which stood in a corner. He went at once, for he was well aware of the poor man's aversion to the sight of a sexton. The woman then quickly hid all the nice

things and the wine in the oven, because if her husband had seen it he would have asked why it was provided.

"Oh dear," sighed Little Claus, on the roof, when he saw the food disappearing.

"Is there anyone up there?" asked the farmer, peering up at Little Claus. "What are you doing up there? You had better come into the house."

Then Little Claus told him how he had lost his way, and asked if he might have shelter for the night.

"Certainly," said the farmer. "But the first thing is to have something to eat."

The woman received them both very kindly, laid the table, and gave them a large bowl of porridge. The farmer was hungry and ate it with a good appetite, but Little Claus could not help thinking of the good roast meat, the fish, and the cake, which he knew were hidden in the oven. He had put his sack with the hide in it under the table by his feet, for as we remember he was on his way to the town to sell it. He did not fancy the porridge, so he trod on the sack and made the dried hide squeak quite loudly.

"Hush!" said Little Claus to his sack, at the same time treading on it again so that it squeaked louder than ever.

"What on earth have you got in your sack?" asked the farmer.

"Oh, it's a goblin," said Little Claus. "He says we needn't eat the porridge, for he has charmed the oven full of roast meat and fish and cake."

"What do you say?" said the farmer, opening the oven door with all speed and seeing the nice things the woman had hidden, but which her husband thought the goblin had produced for their special benefit.

The woman dared not say anything but put the food before them, and then they both made a hearty meal of the fish, the meat, and the cake.

Then Little Claus trod on the skin and made it squeak again.

"What does he say now?" asked the farmer.

"He says," answered Little Claus, "that he has also charmed three bottles of wine into the oven for us."

So the woman had to bring out the wine too, and the farmer drank it and became very merry. Wouldn't he like to have a goblin for himself, like the one in Little Claus's sack!

"Can he charm out the devil?" asked the farmer. "I shouldn't mind seeing him, now that I am in such a merry mood."

"Oh yes!" said Little Claus. "My goblin can do everything that we ask him. Can't you?" he asked, trampling on the sack till it squeaked louder than ever. "Did you hear him say yes? But the devil is so ugly, you'd better not see him."

"Oh, I'm not a bit frightened. Whatever does he look like?"

"Well, he will show himself in the image of a sexton."

"Oh dear!" said the farmer. "That's bad! I must tell you that I can't bear to see a sexton. However, it doesn't matter. I shall know it's only the devil and then I shan't mind so much. Now my courage is up! But he mustn't come too close."

"I'll ask my goblin about it," said Little Claus, treading on the bag and putting his ear close to it.

"What does he say?"

"He says you can go along and open the chest in the corner, and there you'll see the devil moping in the dark. But hold the lid tight so that he doesn't get out."

"Will you help me to hold it?" asked the farmer, going along to the chest where the woman had hidden the real sexton, who was shivering with fright. The farmer lifted up the lid a wee little bit and peeped in.

"Ha!" he shrieked, and sprang back. "Yes, I saw him and he looked just exactly like our sexton. It was a horrible sight!" They had to have a drink after this, and there they sat drinking till far into the night.

"You must sell me that goblin," said the farmer. "You may ask what you like for him! I'll give you a bushel of money for him."

"No, I can't do that," said Little Claus. "You must remember how useful my goblin is to me."

"Oh, but I should so like to have him," said the farmer and he went on begging for him.

"Well," said Little Claus at last, "as you have been so kind to me I shall have to give him up. You shall have him for a bushel of money, but I must have it full to the brim."

"You shall have it," said the farmer. "But you must take that chest away with you! I won't have it in the house for another hour. I'd never know whether he's there or not."

So Little Claus gave his sack with the dried hide in it to the farmer and received in return a bushel of money, and the measure was full to the brim. The farmer also gave him a large wheelbarrow to take the money and the chest away in.

"Good-by," said Little Claus, and off he went with his money and the big chest with the sexton in it.

There was a wide and deep river on the other side of the wood. The current was so strong that it was almost impossible to swim against it. A large new bridge had been built across it, and when they got into the very middle of it, Little Claus said quite loud, so that the sexton could hear him, "What am I to do with this stupid old chest? It might be full of paving stones—it's so heavy. I am quite tired of wheeling it along,

so I'll just throw it into the river. If it floats down the river to my house, well and good; and if it doesn't, I shan't care."

Then he took hold of the chest and raised it up a bit, as if he were about to throw it into the river.

"No, no! Let it be!" shouted the sexton. "Let me get out!"

"Hullo!" said Little Claus, pretending to be frightened. "Why, he's still inside it! Then I must heave it into the river to drown him."

"Oh no! Oh no!" shouted the sexton. "I'll give you a bushel full of money if you'll let me out!"

"Oh, that's another matter," said Little Claus, opening the chest. The sexton crept out at once and pushed the empty chest into the water, and then went home and gave Little Claus a whole bushel full of money. He had already had one from the farmer, you know, so now his wheelbarrow was quite full of money.

"I got a pretty fair price for that horse, I must admit," said he to himself when he got home to his own room and turned the money out of the wheelbarrow into a heap on the floor. "What a rage Great Claus will be in when he discovers how rich I have become through my one horse. But I won't tell him the truth about it." So he sent a boy to Great Claus to borrow a bushel measure.

"What does he want that for?" thought Great Claus. And he rubbed some tallow on the bottom of the measure, so that a little of whatever was to be measured might stick to it. So it did, for when the measure came back three new silver threepenny bits were sticking to it.

"What's this?" said Great Claus, and he ran straight along to Little Claus. "Where on earth did you get all that money?"

"Oh, that was for my horse's hide which I sold last night."

"That was well paid, indeed!" said Great Claus. And he ran home, took an ax, and hit all his four horses on the head. He then flayed them and went off to the town with the hides.

"Skins! Skins! Who will buy skins?" he shouted up and down the streets.

All the shoemakers and tanners in the town came running up and asked him how much he wanted for them.

"A bushel of money for each," said Great Claus.

"Are you mad?" they all said. "Do you imagine we have money by the bushel?"

"Skins! Skins! Who will buy skins?" he shouted again.

The shoemakers took up their measures and the tanners their leather aprons, and beat Great Claus through the town. "Skins! Skins!" they mocked him. "Yes, we'll give you a raw hide. Out of the town with him!" they shouted, and Great Claus had to hurry off as fast as ever he could go. He had never had such a beating in his life.

"Little Claus shall pay for this," he said when he got home. "I'll kill him for it."

Little Claus's old grandmother had just died in his house. She certainly had been very cross and unkind to him, but now that she was dead he felt quite sorry about it. He took the dead woman and put her into his warm bed to see if he could bring her to life again. He meant her to stay there all night, and he would sit on a chair in the corner. He had slept like that before.

As he sat there in the night, the door opened and in came Great Claus with his ax. He knew where Little Claus's bed stood, and he went straight up to it and hit the dead grandmother a blow on the forehead, thinking that it was Little Claus.

"Just see if you'll cheat me again after that," he said. Then he went home again.

"What a bad, wicked man he is," said Little Claus. "He was going to kill me there. What a good thing that poor old granny was dead already, or else he would have killed her."

He now dressed his old grandmother in her best Sunday clothes, borrowed a horse from his neighbor, harnessed it to a cart, and set his grandmother on the back seat so that she could not fall out when the cart moved. Then he started off through the wood. When the sun rose he was just outside a big inn, and Little Claus drew up his horse and went in to get something to eat. The landlord was a very, very rich man and a very good man, but he was fiery-tempered, as if he were made of pepper and tobacco.

"Good morning," said he to Little Claus. "You've got your best clothes on very early this morning!"

"Yes," said Little Claus. "I'm going to town with my old grandmother. She's sitting out there in the cart. I can't get her to come in. Won't you take her out a glass of mead? You'll have to shout at her, for she's very hard of hearing."

"Yes, she shall have it," said the innkeeper, and he poured out a large glass of mead which he took out to the dead grandmother in the cart.

"Here is a glass of mead your son has sent," said the innkeeper, but the dead woman sat quite still and never said a word. "Don't you hear?" shouted the innkeeper as loud as he could. "Here is a glass of mead from your son."

Again he shouted and then again as loud as ever, but as she did not stir he got angry and threw the glass of mead in her face. The mead ran all over her and she fell backwards out of the cart, for she was only stuck up and not tied in.

"Now," shouted Little Claus, as he rushed out of the inn and seized

the landlord by the neck. "You have killed my grandmother! Just look! There's a great hole in her forehead."

"Oh, what a misfortune!" exclaimed the innkeeper, clasping his hands. "That's the consequence of my fiery temper. Good Little Claus, I will give you a bushel of money and bury your grandmother as if she had been my own, if you will only say nothing about it. Otherwise they will chop my head off, and that is so nasty."

So Little Claus had a whole bushel of money, and the innkeeper buried the old grandmother just as if she had been his own.

When Little Claus got home again with all his money, he immediately sent his boy over to Great Claus to borrow his measure.

"What?" said Great Claus, "is he not dead? I shall have to go and see about it myself." So he took the measure over to Little Claus himself.

"I say, wherever did you get all that money?" asked he, his eyes round with amazement at what he saw.

"It was my grandmother you killed instead of me," said Little Claus. "I have sold her and got a bushel of money for her."

"That was good pay indeed!" said Great Claus, so he hurried home, took an ax, and killed his old grandmother.

He then put her in a cart and drove off to town with her where the apothecary lived, and asked if he would buy a dead body.

"Who is it, and where did the body come from?" asked the apothecary.

"It is my grandmother, and I have killed her for a bushel of money," said Great Claus.

"Heaven preserve us!" said the apothecary. "You are talking like a madman. Pray don't say such things! You might lose your head." And he pointed out to him what a horribly wicked thing he had done and what a bad man he was, and that he deserved to be punished. Great Claus was so frightened that he rushed straight out of the shop, jumped into the cart, whipped up his horse, and galloped home. The apothecary and everyone else thought he was mad, and so they let him drive off.

"You shall be paid for this!" said Great Claus, when he got out on the highroad. "You shall pay for this, Little Claus!"

As soon as he got home, he took the biggest sack he could find, went over to Little Claus and said, "You have deceived me again. First I killed my horses, and then my old grandmother. It's all your fault, but you shan't have the chance of cheating me again!" Then he took Little Claus by the waist and put him into the sack, put it on his back, and shouted to him, "I'm going to drown you now!"

It was a long way to go before he came to the river, and Little Claus was not so light to carry. The road passed close by a church in which

the organ was playing, and the people were singing beautifully. Great Claus put down the sack with Little Claus in it close by the church door. He thought he would like to go and hear a psalm before he went any further. As Little Claus could not get out of the bag, and all the people were in the church, Great Claus went in too.

"Oh dear, oh dear!" sighed Little Claus in the sack. He turned and twisted, but it was impossible to undo the cord. Just then an old cattle drover with white hair and a tall stick in his hand came along. He had a whole drove of cows and bulls before him. They ran against the sack Little Claus was in and upset it.

"Oh dear," sighed Little Claus. "I am so young to be going to the Kingdom of Heaven!"

"And I," said the cattle drover, "am so old and cannot get there yet!"

"Open the sack!" shouted Little Claus. "Get in in place of me, and you will get to Heaven directly."

"That will just suit me," said the cattle drover, undoing the sack for Little Claus, who immediately sprang out. "You must look after the cattle now," said the old man as he crept into the sack. Little Claus tied it up and walked off driving the cattle before him.

A little while afterwards Great Claus came out of the church. He took the sack again on his back and he certainly thought it had grown lighter, for the old cattle drover was not more than half the weight of Little Claus.

"How light he seems to have got! That must be because I have been to church and said my prayers." Then he went on to the river, which was both wide and deep, and threw the sack with the old cattle drover in it into the water.

"Now, you won't cheat me again!" he shouted, for he thought it was Little Claus.

Then he went homewards, but when he reached the crossroads he met Little Claus with his herd of cattle.

"What's the meaning of this?" exclaimed Great Claus. "Didn't I drown you?"

"Yes," said Little Claus. "It's just about half an hour since you threw me into the river."

"But where did you get all those splendid beasts?" asked Great Claus.

"They are sea cattle," said Little Claus. "I will tell you the whole story, and indeed I thank you heartily for drowning me. I'm at the top of the tree now and a very rich man, I can tell you. I was so frightened when I was in the sack! The wind whistled in my ears when you threw me over the bridge into the cold water. I immediately sank to the bot-

tom but I was not hurt, for the grass is beautifully soft down there. The sack was opened at once by a beautiful maiden in snow-white clothes with a green wreath on her wet hair. She took my hand and said, 'Are you there, Little Claus? Here are some cattle for you, and a mile further up the road you will come upon another herd which I will give you too!' Then I saw that the river was a great highway for the sea folk. Down at the bottom of it they walked and drove about, from the sea right up to the end of the river. The flowers were lovely and the grass was so fresh! The fishes which swam about glided close to me just like birds in the air. How nice the people were, and what a lot of cattle strolled about in the ditches!"

"But why did you come straight up here again then?" asked Great Claus. "I shouldn't have done that if it was so fine down there."

"Oh," said Little Claus, "that's just my cunning. You remember I told you the mermaid said that a mile further up the road—and by the road she means the river, for she can't go anywhere else—I should find another herd of cattle waiting for me. Well, I know how many bends there are in the river and what a roundabout way it would be. It's ever so much shorter if you can come up on dry land and take the short cuts. You save a couple of miles by it and can get the cattle much sooner."

"Oh, you *are* a fortunate man," said Great Claus. "Do you think I should get some sea cattle if I were to go down to the bottom of the river?"

"I'm sure you would," said Little Claus. "But I can't carry you in the sack to the river. You're too heavy for me. If you'd like to walk there and then get into the sack, I'll throw you into the river with the greatest pleasure in the world."

"Thank you," said Great Claus. "But if I don't get any sea cattle when I get down there, see if I don't give you a sound thrashing."

"Oh, don't be so hard on me!" said Little Claus.

Then they walked off to the river. As soon as the cattle saw the water they rushed down to drink, for they were very thirsty. "See what a hurry they're in," said Little Claus. "They want to get down to the bottom again."

"Now, help me first," said Great Claus, "or else I'll thrash you." He then crept into a big sack which had been lying across the back of one of the cows. "Put a big stone in, or I'm afraid I shan't sink," said Great Claus.

"Oh, have no fear of that," said Little Claus, and he put a big stone into the sack and gave it a push. Plump went the sack and Great Claus was in the river, where he sank to the bottom at once.

"I'm afraid he won't find any cattle," said Little Claus, as he drove his herd home.

THE GIRL WHO TROD ON A LOAF

IDARESAY you have heard of the girl who stepped on a loaf so as not to soil her shoes, and all the misfortunes that befell her in consequence. At any rate the story has been written and printed too.

She was a poor child of a proud and arrogant nature, and her disposition was bad from the beginning. When she was quite tiny, her greatest delight was to catch flies and pull their wings off, to make creeping insects of them. Then she would catch chafers and beetles and stick them on a pin, after which she would push a leaf or a bit of paper close enough for them to seize with their feet, for the pleasure of seeing them wⁱth and wriggle in their efforts to free themselves from the pins.

"The chafer is reading now," said little Inger. "Look at it turning over the page!"

She got worse rather than better as she grew older. But she was very pretty, and that no doubt was her misfortune, or she might have had many a beating which she never got.

"It will take a heavy blow to bend that head," said her own mother. "As a child you have often trampled on my apron. I fear when you are grown up you will trample on my heart."

This she did with a vengeance.

She was sent into service in the country with some rich people. They treated her as if she had been their own child and dressed her in the same style. She grew prettier and prettier, but her pride grew too.

When she had been with them a year, her employers said to her, "You ought to go home to see your parents, little Inger."

So she went, but she only went to show herself, so that they might see how grand she was. When she got to the town gates, and saw the young men and maids gossiping round the pond, and her mother sitting among them with a bundle of sticks she had picked up in the woods, Inger turned away. She was ashamed that one so fine as herself should have for her mother such a ragged old woman who picked up sticks. She was not a bit sorry that she had turned back, only angry.

Another half year passed.

"Little Inger, you really ought to go and see your old parents," said her mistress. "Here is a large loaf of wheaten bread that you may take to them. They will be pleased to see you."

Inger put on all her best clothes and her fine new shoes. She held up her skirts and picked her steps carefully so as to keep her shoes nice and clean. Now no one could blame her for this. But when she came to the path through the marsh a great part of it was wet and muddy, and

she threw the loaf into the mud for a stepping stone, to get over with dry shoes. As she stood there with one foot on the loaf and was lifting up the other for the next step, the loaf sank deeper and deeper with her till she entirely disappeared. Nothing was to be seen but a black bubbling pool.

Now this is the story.

But what had become of her? She went down to the Marsh Wife who has a brewery down there. The Marsh Wife is own sister to the Elf King, and aunt to the Elf maidens who are well enough known. They have had verses written about them and pictures painted, but all that people know about the Marsh Wife is that when the mist rises over the meadows in the summer, she is at her brewing. It was into this brewery that little Inger fell, and no one can stand being there long. A scavenger's cart is sweet compared to the Marsh Wife's brewery. The smell from the barrels is enough to make people faint, and the barrels are so close together that no one can pass between them, but wherever there is a little chink it is filled up with noisome toads and slimy snakes. Little Inger fell among all this horrid living filth. It was so icy cold that she shuddered from head to foot and her limbs grew quite stiff. The loaf stuck fast to her feet and it drew her down just as an amber button draws a bit of straw.

The Marsh Wife was at home. Old Bogey and his great-grandmother were paying her a visit. The great-grandmother is a very venomous old woman, and she is never idle. She never goes out without her work, and she had it with her today too. She was busily making gadabout leather to put into people's shoes so that the wearer might have no rest. She embroidered lies and strung together all the idle words which fell to the ground, to make mischief of them. Oh yes, old great-grandmother can knit and embroider in fine style.

As soon as she saw little Inger, she put up her eyeglass and looked at her through it. "That girl has got something in her," she said. "I should like to have her as a remembrance of my visit. She would make a very good statue in my great-grandson's outer corridor."

So Inger was given to her and this was how she got to Bogeyland. People don't always get there by such a direct route, though it is easy enough to get there in more roundabout ways.

What a never-ending corridor that was, to be sure. It made one giddy to look either backwards or forwards. Here stood an ignominious crew waiting for the door of mercy to be opened, but long might they wait. Great, fat, sprawling spiders spun webs of a thousand years round and round their feet. And these webs were like footscrews and held them as in a vice, or as though bound with a copper chain. Besides, there was such everlasting unrest in every soul—the unrest of torment. The miser

had forgotten the key of his money chest; he knew he had left it sticking in the lock. But it would take far too long to enumerate all the various tortures here. Inger experienced the torture of standing like a statue with a loaf tied to her feet.

"This is what comes of trying to keep one's feet clean," said she to herself. "Look how they stare at me!" They did indeed stare at her. All their evil passions shone out of their eyes and spoke without words from their lips. They were a terrible sight. "It must be a pleasure to look at me!" thought Inger, "for I have a pretty face and nice clothes." And then she turned her eyes to look at them; her neck was too stiff to turn.

But oh, how dirty she had got in the Marsh Wife's brewery; she had never thought of that. Her clothes were covered with slime. A snake had got among her hair and hung dangling down her back. A toad looked out of every fold of her dress, croaking like an asthmatic pug dog. It was most unpleasant. "But all the others down here look frightful too," was her consolation.

Worse than anything was the terrible hunger she felt, and she could not stoop down to break a bit of bread off the loaf she was standing on. No, her back had stiffened, her arms and hands had stiffened, and her whole body was like a pillar of stone. She could turn her eyes, but she could only turn them entirely around, so as to look backwards—and a horrible sight that was. And then came the flies! They crept upon her eyes, and however much she winked they would not fly away. They could not, for she had pulled off their wings and made creeping insects of them. That was indeed a torment added to her gnawing hunger. She seemed at last to be absolutely empty.

"If this is to go on long, I shan't be able to bear it," said she. But it did go on, and bear it she must.

Then a scalding tear fell upon her forehead. It trickled over her face and bosom right down to the loaf. Then another fell, and another, till there was a perfect shower.

Who was crying for little Inger? Had she not a mother on earth? Tears of sorrow shed by a mother for her child will always reach it, but they do not bring healing. They burn and make the torment fifty times worse. Then this terrible hunger again, and she not able to get at the bread under her feet. She felt at last as if she had been feeding upon herself, and had become a mere hollow reed which conducts every sound. She distinctly heard everything that was said on earth about herself, and she heard nothing but hard words.

Certainly her mother wept bitterly and sorrowfully, but at the same time she said, "Pride goes before a fall. There was your misfortune, Inger. How you have grieved your mother!" Her mother and everyone

on earth knew all about her sin: how she had stepped upon the loaf and sunk down under the earth, and so was lost. The cowherd had told them so much. He had seen it himself from the hillock where he was standing.

"How you have grieved your mother, Inger," said the poor woman. "But then I always said you would."

"Oh, that I had never been born!" thought Inger then. "I should have been much better off. My mother's tears are no good now."

She heard the good people her employers, who had been like parents to her, talking about her. "She was a sinful child," they said. "She did not value the gifts of God but trod them under foot. She will find it hard to open the door of mercy."

"They ought to have brought me up better," thought Inger. "They should have knocked the nonsense out of me if it was there."

She heard that a song had been written about her and sung all over the country: "The arrogant girl who trod on a loaf to keep her shoes clean."

"That I should hear that old story so often and have to suffer so much for it!" thought Inger.

"The others ought to be punished for their sins, too," said Inger. "There would be plenty to punish. Oh how I am being tormented!"

And her heart grew harder than her outer shell.

"Nobody will ever get any better in this company, and I won't be any better. See how they are all staring at me!"

Her heart was full of anger and malice towards everybody.

"Now they have got something to talk about up there! Oh, this torture!"

She heard people telling her story to children, and the little one always called her "wicked Inger"—"she was so naughty that she had to be tormented." She heard nothing but hard words from the children's mouths.

But one day when anger and hunger were gnawing at her hollow shell, she heard her name mentioned and her story being told to an innocent child, a little girl, and the little creature burst into tears at the story of proud, vain Inger.

"But will she never come up here again?" asked the child. And the answer was, "She will never come up again."

"But if she were to ask pardon and promise never to do it again?"

"She won't ask pardon," they said.

"But I want her to do it," said the little girl, who refused to be comforted. "I will give my doll's house if she may only come up again. It is so dreadful for poor Inger."

These words reached down into Inger's heart and they seemed to do

her good. It was the first time that anyone had said, "Poor Inger," without adding anything about her misdeeds. A little innocent child was weeping and praying for her, and it made her feel quite odd. She would have liked to cry herself, but she could not shed a tear, and this was a further torment.

As the years passed above, so they went on below without any change. She less often heard sounds from above, and she was less talked about. But one day she was aware of a sigh. "Inger, Inger, what a grief you have been to me, but I always knew you would." It was her mother who was dying. Occasionally she heard her name mentioned by her old employers, and the gentlest words her mistress used were, "Shall I ever see you again, Inger? One never knows whither one may go."

But Inger knew very well that her good kindly mistress could never come to the place where she was.

Again a long bitter period passed. Then Inger again heard her name pronounced, and saw above her head what seemed to be two bright stars. They were in fact two kind eyes which were closing on earth. So many years had gone by since the little girl had cried so bitterly at the story of "Poor Inger," that the child had grown to be an old woman whom the Lord was now calling to Himself. In the last hour when one's whole life comes back to one, she remembered how as a little child she had wept bitter tears at the story of Inger. The impression was so clear to the old woman in the hour of death that she exclaimed aloud, "O Lord, may I not, like Inger, have trodden on Thy blessed gifts without thinking? And may I not also have nourished pride in my heart? But in Thy mercy Thou didst not let me fall! Forsake me not now in my last hour!"

The old woman's eyes closed and the eyes of her soul were opened to see the hidden things, and as Inger had been so vividly present in her last thoughts, she saw now how deep she had sunk. And at the sight she burst into tears. Then she stood in the Kingdom of Heaven, as a child, weeping for poor Inger. Her tears and prayers echoed into the hollow, empty shell which surrounded the imprisoned, tortured soul, and it was quite overwhelmed by all this unexpected love from above. An angel of God weeping over her! Why was this vouchsafed to her? The tortured soul recalled every earthly action it had ever performed, and at last it melted into tears, in a way Inger had never done.

She was filled with grief for herself. It seemed as though the gate of mercy could never be opened to her. But as in humble contrition she acknowledged this, a ray of light shone into the gulf of destruction. The strength of the ray was far greater than that of the sunbeam which melts the snowman built up by the boys in the garden. And sooner, much sooner, than a snowflake melts on the warm lips of a child, did

Inger's stony form dissolve before it. And a little bird with lightning speed winged its way to the upper world. It was terribly shy and afraid of everything. It was ashamed of itself and afraid to meet the eye of any living being, so it hastily sought shelter in a chink in the wall. There it cowered, shuddering in every limb. It could not utter a sound, for it had no voice. It sat for a long time before it could survey calmly all the wonders around. Yes, they were wonders indeed! The air was so sweet and fresh, the moon shone so brightly, the trees and bushes were so fragrant. And then the comfort of it all; its feathers were so clean and dainty.

How all creation spoke of love and beauty! The bird would gladly have sung aloud all these thoughts stirring in its breast, but it had not the power. Gladly would it have caroled as do the cuckoos and nightingales in summer. The good God, who hears the voiceless hymn of praise even of a worm, was also aware of this psalm of thanksgiving trembling in the breast of the bird, as the psalms of David echoed in his heart before they shaped themselves into words and melody. These thoughts and these voiceless songs grew and swelled for weeks. They must have an outlet, and at the first attempt at a good deed this would be found.

Then came the holy Christmas feast. The peasants raised a pole against a wall, and tied a sheaf of oats on to the top so that the little birds might have a good meal on the happy Christmas Day.

The sun rose bright and shone upon the sheaf of oats, and the twittering birds surrounded the pole. Then from the chink in the wall came a feeble tweet-tweet. The swelling thoughts of the bird had found a voice, and this faint twitter was its hymn of praise. The thought of a good deed was awakened, and the bird flew out of its hiding place. In the Kingdom of Heaven this bird was well known.

It was a very hard winter and all the water had thick ice over it. The birds and wild creatures had great difficulty in finding food. The little bird flew along the highways, finding here and there in the tracks of the sledges a grain of corn. At the baiting places it also found a few morsels of bread, of which it would only eat a crumb, and gave the rest to the other starving sparrows which it called up. Then it flew into the town and peeped about. Wherever a loving hand had strewn bread crumbs for the birds, it ate only one crumb and gave the rest away.

In the course of the winter the bird had collected and given away so many crumbs of bread that they equaled in weight the whole loaf which little Inger had stepped upon to keep her shoes clean. When the last crumbs were found and given away, the bird's gray wings became white and spread themselves wide.

"A tern is flying away over the sea," said the children who saw the

white bird. Now it dived into the sea, and now it soared up into the bright sunshine. It gleamed so brightly that it was not possible to see what became of it. They said it flew right into the sun.

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

MANY years ago there was an Emperor who was so excessively fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on them. He cared nothing about his soldiers, nor for the theatre, nor for driving in the woods except for the sake of showing off his new clothes. He had a costume for every hour in the day. Instead of saying as one does about any other king or emperor, "He is in his council chamber," the people here always said, "The Emperor is in his dressing room."

Life was very gay in the great town where he lived. Hosts of strangers came to visit it every day, and among them one day were two swindlers. They gave themselves out as weavers and said that they knew how to weave the most beautiful fabrics imaginable. Not only were the colors and patterns unusually fine, but the clothes that were made of this cloth had the peculiar quality of becoming invisible to every person who was not fit for the office he held, or who was impossibly dull.

"Those must be splendid clothes," thought the Emperor. "By wearing them I should be able to discover which men in my kingdom are unfitted for their posts. I shall distinguish the wise men from the fools. Yes, I certainly must order some of that stuff to be woven for me."

The Emperor paid the two swindlers a lot of money in advance, so that they might begin their work at once.

They did put up two looms and pretended to weave, but they had nothing whatever upon their shuttles. At the outset they asked for a quantity of the finest silk and the purest gold thread, all of which they put into their own bags while they worked away at the empty looms far into the night.

"I should like to know how those weavers are getting on with their cloth," thought the Emperor, but he felt a little queer when he reflected that anyone who was stupid or unfit for his post would not be able to see it. He certainly thought that he need have no fears for himself, but still he thought he would send somebody else first to see how it was getting on. Everybody in the town knew what wonderful power the stuff possessed, and everyone was anxious to see how stupid his neighbor was.

"I will send my faithful old minister to the weavers," thought the

Emperor. "He will be best able to see how the stuff looks, for he is a clever man and no one fulfills his duties better than he does."

So the good old minister went into the room where the two swindlers sat working at the empty loom.

"Heaven help us," thought the old minister, opening his eyes very wide. "Why, I can't see a thing!" But he took care not to say so.

Both the swindlers begged him to be good enough to step a little nearer, and asked if he did not think it a good pattern and beautiful coloring. They pointed to the empty loom. The poor old minister stared as hard as he could, but he could not see anything, for of course there was nothing to see.

"Good heavens," thought he. "Is it possible that I am a fool? I have never thought so, and nobody must know it. Am I not fit for my post? It will never do to say that I cannot see the stuff."

"Well, sir, you don't say anything about the stuff," said the one who was pretending to weave.

"Oh, it is beautiful—quite charming," said the minister, looking through his spectacles. "Such a pattern and such colors! I will certainly tell the Emperor that the stuff pleases me very much."

"We are delighted to hear you say so," said the swindlers, and then they named all the colors and described the peculiar pattern. The old minister paid great attention to what they said, so as to be able to repeat it when he got home to the Emperor.

Then the swindlers went on to demand more money, more silk, and more gold, to be able to proceed with the weaving. But they put it all into their own pockets. Not a single strand was ever put into the loom, but they went on as before, weaving at the empty loom.

The Emperor soon sent another faithful official to see how the stuff was getting on and if it would soon be ready. The same thing happened to him as to the minister. He looked and looked, but as there was only the empty loom, he could see nothing at all.

"Is not this a beautiful piece of stuff?" said both the swindlers, showing and explaining the beautiful pattern and colors which were not there to be seen.

"I know I am no fool," thought the man, "so it must be that I am unfit for my good post. It is very strange, though. However, one must not let it appear." So he praised the stuff he did not see, and assured them of his delight in the beautiful colors and the originality of the design.

"It is absolutely charming," he said to the Emperor. Everybody in the town was talking about this splendid stuff.

Now the Emperor thought he would like to see it while it was still on the loom. So, accompanied by a number of selected courtiers, among

whom were the two faithful officials who had already seen the imaginary stuff, he went to visit the crafty impostors, who were working away as hard as ever they could at the empty loom.

"It is magnificent," said both the honest officials. "Only see, Your Majesty, what a design! What colors!" And they pointed to the empty loom, for they each thought no doubt the others could see the stuff.

"What?" thought the Emperor. "I see nothing at all. This is terrible! Am I a fool? Am I not fit to be Emperor? Why, nothing worse could happen to me!"

"Oh, it is beautiful," said the Emperor. "It has my highest approval." And he nodded his satisfaction as he gazed at the empty loom. Nothing would induce him to say that he could not see anything.

The whole suite gazed and gazed, but saw nothing more than all the others. However, they all exclaimed with His Majesty, "It is very beautiful." And they advised him to wear a suit made of this wonderful cloth on the occasion of a great procession which was just about to take place. "Magnificent! Gorgeous! Excellent!" went from mouth to mouth. They were all equally delighted with it. The Emperor gave each of the rogues an order of knighthood to be worn in their buttonholes and the title of "Gentleman Weaver."

The swindlers sat up the whole night before the day on which the procession was to take place, burning sixteen candles, so that people might see how anxious they were to get the Emperor's new clothes ready. They pretended to take the stuff off the loom. They cut it out in the air with a huge pair of scissors, and they stitched away with needles without any thread in them.

At last they said, "Now the Emperor's new clothes are ready."

The Emperor with his grandest courtiers went to them himself, and both swindlers raised one arm in the air, as if they were holding something. They said, "See, these are the trousers. This is the coat. Here is the mantle," and so on. "It is as light as a spider's web. One might think one had nothing on, but that is the very beauty of it."

"Yes," said all the courtiers, but they could not see anything, for there was nothing to see.

"Will Your Imperial Majesty be graciously pleased to take off your clothes?" said the impostors. "Then we may put on the new ones, along here before the great mirror."

The Emperor took off all his clothes, and the impostors pretended to give him one article of dress after the other of the new ones which they had pretended to make. They pretended to fasten something around his waist and to tie on something. This was the train, and the Emperor turned round and round in front of the mirror.

"How well His Majesty looks in the new clothes! How becoming they are!" cried all the people round. "What a design, and what colors! They are most gorgeous robes."

"The canopy is waiting outside which is to be carried over Your Majesty in the procession," said the master of the ceremonies.

"Well, I am quite ready," said the Emperor. "Don't the clothes fit well?" Then he turned round again in front of the mirror, so that he should seem to be looking at his grand things.

The chamberlains who were to carry the train stooped and pretended to lift it from the ground with both hands, and they walked along with their hands in the air. They dared not let it appear that they could not see anything.

Then the Emperor walked along in the procession under the gorgeous canopy, and everybody in the streets and at the windows exclaimed, "How beautiful the Emperor's new clothes are! What a splendid train! And they fit to perfection!" Nobody would let it appear that he could see nothing, for then he would not be fit for his post, or else he was a fool.

None of the Emperor's clothes had been so successful before.

"But he has got nothing on," said a little child.

"Oh, listen to the innocent," said its father. And one person whispered to the other what the child had said. "He has nothing on—a child says he has nothing on!"

"But he has nothing on!" at last cried all the people.

The Emperor writhed, for he knew it was true. But he thought, "The procession must go on now." So he held himself stiffer than ever, and the chamberlains held up the invisible train.

THE MERMAID

FAR OUT in the sea the water is as blue as the petals of the most beautiful cornflower, and as clear as the purest glass. But it is very deep, deeper than any cable will sound, many steeples must be placed one above the other to reach from the ground to the surface of the water. And down there live the sea people.

Now, you must not believe there is nothing down there but the naked sand; no—the strangest trees and plants grow there, so pliable in their stalks and leaves that at the least motion of the water they move just as if they had life. All fishes, great and small, glide among the twigs,

just as here the birds do in the trees. In the deepest spot of all lies the sea king's castle: the walls are of coral, and the tall, Gothic windows of the clearest amber; shells form the roof, and they open and shut according as the water flows. It looks lovely, for in each shell lie gleaming pearls, a single one of which would have great value in a queen's diadem.

The sea king below there had been a widower for many years, while his old mother kept house for him. She was a clever woman, but proud of her rank, so she wore twelve oysters on her tail, while the other great people were only allowed to wear six. Beyond this she was deserving of great praise, especially because she was very fond of her granddaughters, the little sea princesses. These were six pretty children; but the youngest was the most beautiful of all. Her skin was as clear and as fine as a rose leaf; her eyes were as blue as the deepest sea; but, like all the rest, she had no feet, for her body ended in a fishtail.

All day long they could play in the castle, down in the halls, where living flowers grew out of the walls. The great amber windows were opened, and then the fishes swam in to them, just as the swallows fly in to us when we open our windows; but the fishes swam straight up to the Princesses, ate out of their hands, and let themselves be stroked.

Outside the castle was a great garden with bright red and dark blue flowers; the fruit glowed like gold, and the flowers like flames of fire; and they continually kept moving their stalks and leaves. The earth itself was the finest sand, but blue as the flame of brimstone. A peculiar blue radiance lay upon everything down there: one would have thought oneself high in the air, with the canopy of heaven above and around, rather than at the bottom of the deep sea. During a calm the sun could be seen; it appeared like a purple flower, from which all light streamed out.

Each of the little Princesses had her own little place in the garden, where she might dig and plant at her good pleasure. One gave her flower bed the form of a whale; another thought it better to make hers like a little sea woman; but the youngest made hers quite round, like the sun, and had flowers which gleamed red as the sun itself. She was a strange child, quiet and thoughtful; and when the other sisters made a display of the beautiful things they had received out of wrecked ships, she would have nothing beyond the red flowers which resembled the sun, except a pretty marble statue. This was a figure of a charming boy, hewn out of white clear stone, which had sunk down to the bottom of the sea from a wreck. She planted a pink weeping willow beside this statue; the tree grew famously, and hung its fresh branches over the statue towards the blue sandy ground, where the shadow showed violet,

and moved like the branches themselves; it seemed as if the ends of the branches and the roots were playing together and wished to kiss each other.

There was no greater pleasure for her than to hear of the world of men above them. The old grandmother had to tell all she knew of ships and towns, of men and animals. It seemed particularly beautiful to her that up on the earth the flowers shed fragrance, for they had none down at the bottom of the sea, and that the trees were green, and that the fishes which one saw there among the trees could sing so loud and clear that it was a pleasure to hear them. What the grandmother called fishes were the little birds; the Princess could not understand them in any other way, for she had never seen a bird.

"When you have reached your fifteenth year," said the grandmother, "you shall have leave to rise up out of the sea, to sit on the rocks in the moonlight, and to see the great ships as they sail by. Then you will see forests and towns!"

In the next year one of the sisters was fifteen years of age, but each of the others was one year younger than the next; so that the youngest had full five years to wait before she could come up from the bottom of the sea, and find how our world looked. But one promised to tell the others what she had seen and what she had thought the most beautiful on the first day of her visit; for their grandmother could not tell them enough—there was so much about which they wanted information.

No one was more anxious about these things than the youngest—just that one who had the longest time to wait, and who was always quiet and thoughtful. Many a night she stood by the open window, and looked up through the dark blue water at the fishes splashing with their fins and tails. Moon and stars she could see; they certainly shone quite faintly, but through the water they looked much larger than they appear in our eyes. When something like a black cloud passed among them, she knew that it was either a whale swimming over her head, or a ship with many people: they certainly did not think that a pretty little mermaid was standing down below stretching up her white hands toward the keel of their ship.

Now the eldest princess was fifteen years old, and might mount up to the surface of the sea.

When she came back, she had a hundred things to tell—but the finest thing, she said, was to lie in the moonshine on a sand bank in the quiet sea, and to look at the neighboring coast, with the large town, where the lights twinkled like a hundred stars, and to hear the music and the noise and clamor of carriages and men, to see the many church steeples, and to hear the sound of the bells. Just because she could not get up to these, she longed for them more than for anything.

O how the youngest sister listened! and afterwards when she stood at the open window and looked up through the dark-blue water, she thought of the great city with all its bustle and noise; and then she thought she could hear the church bells ringing, even down to the depth where she was.

In the following year, the second sister received permission to mount upward through the water and to swim whither she pleased. She rose up just as the sun was setting; and this spectacle, she said, was the most beautiful. The whole sky looked like gold, and as to the clouds, she could not properly describe their beauty. They sailed away over her head, purple and violet-colored, but far quicker than the clouds there flew a flight of wild swans, like a long white veil, over the water toward where the sun stood. She swam toward them; but the sun sank, and the roseate hue faded on the sea and in the clouds.

In the following year the next sister went up. She was the boldest of them all, and therefore she swam up a broad stream that poured its waters into the sea. She saw glorious green hills clothed with vines; palaces and castles shone forth from amid splendid woods; she heard how all the birds sang; and the sun shone so warm that she was often obliged to dive under the water to cool her glowing face. In a little bay she found a whole swarm of little mortals. They were quite naked, and splashed about in the water: she wanted to play with them, but they fled in affright, and a little black animal came—it was a dog, but she had never seen a dog—and it barked at her so terribly that she became frightened, and tried to gain the open sea. But she could never forget the glorious woods, the green hills, and the pretty children, who could swim in the water, though they had not fishtails.

The fourth sister was not so bold: she remained out in the midst of the wild sea, and declared that just there it was most beautiful. One could see for many miles around, and the sky above looked like a bell of glass. She had seen ships, but only in the far distance—they looked like seagulls; and the funny dolphins had thrown somersaults, and the great whales spouted out water from their nostrils, so that it looked like hundreds of fountains all around.

Now came the turn of the fifth sister. Her birthday came in the winter, and so she saw what the others had not seen the first time. The sea looked quite green, and great icebergs were floating about; each one appeared like a pear¹, she said, and yet was much taller than the church steeples built by men. They showed themselves in the strangest forms, and shone like diamonds. She had seated herself upon one of the greatest of all, and let the wind play with her long hair; and all the sailing ships tacked about in a very rapid way beyond where she sat: but toward evening the sky became covered with clouds, it thundered and light-

ened, and the black waves lifted the great ice blocks high up, and let them glow in the red glare. On all the ships the sails were reefed, and there was fear and anguish. But she sat quietly upon her floating iceberg, and saw the forked blue flashes dart into the sea.

Each of the sisters, as she came up for the first time to the surface of the water, was delighted with the new and beautiful sights she saw; but as they now had permission, as grown-up girls, to go whenever they liked, it became indifferent to them. They wished themselves back again, and after a month had elapsed they said it was best of all down below, for there one felt so comfortably at home.

Many an evening hour the five sisters took one another by the arm and rose up in a row over the water. They had splendid voices, more charming than any mortal could have; and when a storm was approaching, so that they could apprehend that ships would go down, they swam on before the ships and sang lovely songs, which told how beautiful it was at the bottom of the sea, and exhorted the sailors not to be afraid to come down. But these could not understand the words, and thought it was the storm sighing; and they did not see the splendors below, for if the ships sank they were drowned, and came as corpses to the sea king's palace.

When the sisters thus rose up, arm in arm, in the evening time, through the water, the little sister stood all alone looking after them; and she felt as if she must weep; but the mermaid has no tears, and for this reason she suffers far more acutely.

"O if I were only fifteen years old!" said she. "I know I shall love the world up there very much, and the people who live and dwell there."

At last she was really fifteen years old.

"Now, you see, you are grown up," said the grandmother, the old dowager. "Come, let me adorn you like your sisters."

And she put a wreath of white lilies in the little maid's hair, but each flower was half a pearl; and the old lady let eight great oysters attach themselves to the Princess' tail, in token of her high rank.

"But that hurts so!" said the little mermaid.

"Yes, pride must suffer pain," replied the old lady.

O how glad she would have been to shake off all the tokens of rank and lay aside the heavy wreath! Her red flowers in the garden suited her better; but she could not help it. "Farewell!" she said, and then she rose, light and clear as a water bubble, up through the sea.

The sun had just set when she lifted her head above the sea, but all the clouds still shone like roses and gold, and in the pale red sky the evening stars gleamed bright and beautiful. The air was mild and fresh, and the sea quite calm. There lay a great ship with three masts; one sin-

gle sail only was set, for not a breeze stirred, and around in the shrouds and on the yards sat the sailors. There was music and singing, and as the evening closed in, hundreds of colored lanterns were lighted up, and looked as if the flags of every nation were waving in the air. The little mermaid swam straight to the cabin window, and each time the sea lifted her up, she could look through the panes, which were clear as crystal, and see many people standing within dressed in their best. But the handsomest of all was the young Prince with the great black eyes: he was certainly not much more than sixteen years old; it was his birthday, and that was the cause of all this feasting. The sailors were dancing upon deck, and when the young Prince came out, more than a hundred rockets rose into the air; they shone like day, so that the little mermaid was quite startled, and dived under the water; but soon she put out her head again, and then it seemed just as if all the stars of heaven were falling down upon her. She had never seen such fireworks. Great suns spurted fire all around, glorious fiery fishes flew up into the blue air, and everything was mirrored in the clear blue sea. The ship itself was so brightly lit up that every separate rope could be seen, and the people therefore appeared the more plainly. O how handsome the young Prince was! And he pressed the people's hands and smiled, while the music rang out in the glorious night.

It became late; but the little mermaid could not turn her eyes from the ship and from the beautiful Prince. The colored lanterns were extinguished, rockets ceased to fly into the air, and no more cannons were fired; but there was a murmuring and a buzzing deep down in the sea; and she sat on the water, swaying up and down, so that she could look into the cabin. But as the ship got more way, one sail after another was spread. And now the waves rose higher, great clouds came up, and in the distance there was lightning. O! it was going to be fearful weather, therefore the sailors furled the sails. The great ship flew in swift career over the wild sea: the waters rose up like great black mountains, which wanted to roll over the masts; but like a swan the ship dived into the valleys between these high waves, and then let itself be lifted on high again. To the little mermaid this seemed merry sport, but to the sailors it appeared very differently. The ship groaned and creaked; the thick planks were bent by the heavy blows; the sea broke into the ship; the mainmast snapped in two like a thin reed; and the ship lay over on her side, while the water rushed into the hold. Now the little mermaid saw that the people were in peril; she herself was obliged to take care to avoid the beams and fragments of the ship which were floating about on the waters. One moment it was so pitch dark that not a single object could be described, but when it lightened it became so bright that she could distinguish every one on board. She looked particularly for the

young Prince, and when the ship parted she saw him sink into the sea. Then she was very glad, for now he would come down to her. But then she remembered that people could not live in the water, and that when he got down to her father's palace he would certainly be dead. No, he must not die: so she swam about among the beams and planks that strewed the surface, quite forgetting that one of them might have crushed her. Diving down deep under the water, she again rose high up among the waves, and in this way she at last came to the Prince, who could scarcely swim longer in that stormy sea. His arms and legs began to fail him, his beautiful eyes closed, and he would have died had the little mermaid not come. She held his head up over the water, and then allowed the waves to carry her and him whither they listed.

When the morning came the storm had passed by. Of the ship not a fragment was to be seen. The sun came up red and shining out of the water; it was as if its beams brought back the hue of life to the cheeks of the Prince, but his eyes remained closed. The mermaid kissed his high, fair forehead and put back his wet hair, and he seemed to her to be like the marble statue in her little garden: she kissed him again and hoped that he might live.

Now she saw in front of her the dry land—high blue mountains, on whose summits the white snow gleamed as if swans were lying there. Down on the coast were glorious green forests, and a building—she could not tell whether it was a church or a convent—stood there. In its garden grew orange and citron trees, and high palms waved in front of the gate. The sea formed a little bay there; it was quite calm, but very deep. Straight toward the rock where the fine white sand had been cast up, she swam with the handsome Prince, and laid him upon the sand, taking especial care that his head was raised in the warm sunshine.

Now all the bells rang in the great white building, and many young girls came walking through the garden. Then the little mermaid swam farther out between some high stones that stood up out of the water, laid some sea foam upon her hair and neck, so that no one could see her little countenance, and then she watched to see who would come to the poor Prince.

In a short time a young girl went that way. She seemed to be much startled, but only for a moment; then she brought more people, and the mermaid perceived that the Prince came back to life, and that he smiled at all around him. But he did not cast a smile at her: he did not know that she had saved him. And she felt very sorrowful; and when he was led away into the great building, she dived mournfully under the water and returned to her father's palace.

She had always been gentle and melancholy, but now she became much

more so. Her sisters asked her what she had seen the first time she rose up to the surface, but she would tell them nothing.

Many an evening and many a morning she went up to the place where she had left the Prince. She saw how the fruits of the garden grew ripe and were gathered; she saw how the snow melted on the high mountain; but she did not see the Prince, and so she always returned home more sorrowful still. Then her only comfort was to sit in her little garden, and to wind her arm round the beautiful marble statue that resembled the Prince; but she did not tend her flowers; they grew as if in a wilderness over the paths, and trailed their long leaves and stalks up into the branches of trees, so that it became quite dark there.

At last she could endure it no longer, and told all to one of her sisters, and then the others heard of it too; but nobody knew of it beyond these and a few other mermaids, who told the secret to their intimate friends. One of these knew who the Prince was; she too had seen the festival on board the ship; and she announced whence he came and where his kingdom lay.

"Come, little sister!" said the other Princesses; and, linking their arms together, they rose up in a long row out of the sea, at the place where they knew the Prince's palace lay.

This palace was built of a kind of bright yellow stone, with great marble staircases, one of which led directly down into the sea. Over the roof rose slender gilt cupolas, and between the pillars which surrounded the whole dwelling, stood marble statues which looked as if they were alive. Through the clear glass in the high windows one looked into the glorious halls, where costly silk hangings and tapestries were hung up, and all the walls were decked with splendid pictures, so that it was a perfect delight to see them. In the midst of the greatest of these halls a great fountain plashed; its jets shot high up toward the glass dome in the ceiling, through which the sun shone down upon the water and upon the lovely plants growing in the great basin.

Now she knew where he lived, and many an evening and many a night she spent there on the water. She swam far closer to the land than any of the others would have dared to venture; indeed, she went quite up the narrow channel under the splendid marble balcony, which threw a broad shadow upon the water. Here she sat and watched the young Prince, who thought himself quite alone in the bright moonlight.

Many an evening she saw him sailing, amid the sounds of music, in his costly boat with the waving flags; she peeped up through the green reeds, and when the wind caught her silver-white veil, and any one saw it, he thought it was a white swan spreading out its wings.

Many a night when the fishermen were on the sea with their torches,

she heard much good told of the young Prince; and she rejoiced that she had saved his life when he was driven about, half dead, on the wild billows: she thought how quietly his head had reclined on her bosom, and how heartily she had kissed him; but he knew nothing of it, and could not even dream of her.

More and more she began to love mankind, and more and more she wished to be able to wander about among those whose world seemed far larger than her own. For they could fly over the sea in ships, and mount up the high hills far above the clouds, and the lands they possessed stretched out in woods and fields farther than her eyes could reach. There was much she wished to know, but her sisters could not answer all her questions; therefore she applied to the old grandmother; and the old lady knew the upper world, which she rightly called "the countries above the sea," very well.

"If people are not drowned," asked the little mermaid, "can they live forever? Do they not die as we die down here in the sea?"

"Yes," replied the old lady. "They too must die, and their life is even shorter than ours. We can live to be three hundred years old, but when we cease to exist here, we are turned into foam on the surface of the water, and have not even a grave down here among those we love. We have not an immortal soul; we never receive another life; we are like the green seaweed, which, when once cut through, can never bloom again. Men, on the contrary, have a soul which lives forever, which lives on after the body has become dust; it mounts up through the clear air, up to all the shining stars! As we rise up out of the waters and behold all the lands of the earth, so they rise up to unknown glorious places which we can never see."

"Why did we not receive an immortal soul?" asked the little mermaid, sorrowfully. "I would gladly give all the hundreds of years I have to live to be a human being only for one day, and to have a hope of partaking the heavenly kingdom."

"You must not think of that," replied the old lady. "We feel ourselves far more happy and far better than mankind yonder."

"Then I am to die and be cast as foam upon the sea, not hearing the music of the waves, nor seeing the pretty flowers and the red sun? Can I not do anything to win an immortal soul?"

"No!" answered the grandmother. "Only if a man were to love you so that you should be more to him than father or mother; if he should cling to you with his every thought and with all his love, and let the priest lay his right hand in yours with a promise of faithfulness here and in all eternity, then his soul would be imparted to your body, and you would receive a share of the happiness of mankind. He would give a soul to you and yet retain his own. But that can never come to pass.

What is considered beautiful here in the sea—the fishtail—they would consider ugly on the earth: they don't understand it; there one must have two clumsy supports which they call legs, to be called beautiful."

Then the little mermaid sighed and looked mournfully upon her fishtail.

"Let us be glad!" said the old lady. "Let us dance and leap in the three hundred years we have to live. That is certainly long enough; after that we can rest ourselves all the better. This evening we shall have a court ball."

It was a splendid sight, such as is never seen on earth. The walls and the ceiling of the great dancing-saloon were of thick but transparent glass. Several hundreds of huge shells, pink and grass-green, stood on each side in rows, filled with a blue fire which lit up the whole hall and shone through the walls, so that the sea without was quite lit up; one could see all the innumerable fishes, great and small, swimming toward the glass walls; of some the scales gleamed with purple, while in others they shone like silver and gold. Through the midst of the hall flowed a broad stream, and on this the sea men and sea women danced to their own charming songs. Such beautiful voices the people of the earth have not. The little mermaid sang the most sweetly of all, and the whole court applauded with hands and tails, and for a moment she felt gay in her heart, for she knew she had the loveliest voice of all in the sea or on the earth. But soon she thought again of the world above her; she could not forget the charming Prince, or her sorrow at not having an immortal soul like his. Therefore she crept out of her father's palace, and while everything within was joy and gladness, she sat melancholy in her little garden. Then she heard the bugle horn sounding through the waters, and thought, "Now he is certainly sailing above, he on whom my wishes hang, and in whose hand I should like to lay my life's happiness. I will dare everything to win him and an immortal soul. While my sisters dance yonder in my father's palace, I will go to the sea witch of whom I have always been so much afraid: perhaps she can counsel and help me."

Now the little mermaid went out of her garden to the foaming whirlpools behind which the soocress dwelt. She had never traveled that way before. No flowers grew there, no sea grass; only the naked gray sand stretched out toward the whirlpools, where the water rushed round like roaring millwheels and tore down everything it seized into the deep. Through the midst of these rushing whirlpools she was obliged to pass to get into the domain of the witch; and for a long way there was no other road except one which led over warm gushing mud: this the witch called her turf moor. Behind it lay her house in the midst of a singular forest, in which all the trees and bushes were polyps—half-

animals, half-plants. They looked like hundred-headed snakes growing up out of the earth. All the branches were long, slimy arms, with fingers like supple worms, and they moved limb by limb from the root to the farthest point; all that they could seize on in the water they held fast and did not let it go. The little mermaid stopped in front of them quite frightened; her heart beat with fear, and she was near turning back; but then she thought of the Prince and the human soul, and her courage came back again. She bound her long, flying hair closely around her head, so that the polyps might not seize it. She put her hands together on her breast, and then shot forward, as a fish shoots through the water, among the ugly polyps, which stretched out their supple arms and fingers after her. She saw that each of them held something it had seized with hundreds of little arms, like strong iron bands. People who had perished at sea, and had sunk deep down, looked forth as white skeletons from among the polyps' arms; ships' oars and chests they also held fast, and skeletons of land animals, and a little sea woman whom they had caught and strangled; and this seemed the most terrible of all to our little Princess.

Now she came to a great marshy place in the wood, where fat water snakes rolled about, showing their ugly cream-colored bodies. In the midst of this marsh was a house built of white bones of shipwrecked men; there sat the sea witch, feeding a toad out of her mouth, just as a person might feed a little canary with sugar. She called the ugly fat water snakes her little chickens, and allowed them to crawl upward and all about her.

"I know what you want," said the sea witch. "It is stupid of you, but you shall have your way, for it will bring you to grief, my pretty Princess. You want to get rid of your fishtail, and to have two supports instead of it, like those the people of the earth walk with, so that the young Prince may fall in love with you, and you may get an immortal soul." And with this the Witch laughed loudly and disagreeably, so that the toad and the water snakes tumbled down to the ground, where they crawled about. "You come just in time," said the Witch: "after tomorrow at sunrise I could not help you until another year had gone by. I will prepare a draught for you, with which you must swim to land tomorrow before the sun rises, and seat yourself there and drink it; then your tail will shrivel up and become what the people of the earth call legs; but it will hurt you—it will seem as if you were cut with a sharp sword. All who see you will declare you to be the prettiest human being they ever beheld. You will keep your graceful walk; no dancer will be able to move so lightly as you; but every step you take will be as if you trod upon sharp knives, and as if your blood must flow. If you will bear all this, I can help you."

"Yes!" said the little mermaid, with a trembling voice; and she thought of the Prince and the immortal soul.

"But remember," said the Witch, "when you have once received a human form, you can never be a mermaid again; you can never return through the water to your sisters, or to your father's palace; and if you do not win the Prince's love, so that he forgets father and mother for your sake, is attached to you heart and soul, and tells the priest to join your hands, you will not receive an immortal soul. On the first morning after he has married another, your heart will break, and you will become foam on the water."

"I will do it," said the little mermaid; but she became as pale as death.

"But you must pay me, too," said the Witch; "and it is not a trifle that I ask. You have the finest voice of all here at the bottom of the water; with that you think to enchant him; but this voice you must give to me. The best thing you possess I will have for my costly draught! I must give you my own blood in it, so that the draught may be sharp as a two-edged sword."

"But if you take away my voice," said the little mermaid, "what will remain to me?"

"Your beautiful form," replied the Witch, "your graceful walk, and your speaking eyes: with those you can take captive a human heart. Well, have you lost your courage? Put out your little tongue, and then I will cut it off for my payment, and then you shall have the strong draught."

"It shall be so," said the little mermaid.

And the Witch put on her pot to brew the draught.

"Cleanliness is a good thing," said she; and she cleaned out the pot with the snakes, which she tied up in a big knot; then she scratched herself, and let her black blood drop into it. The stream rose up in the strangest forms, enough to frighten the beholder. Every moment the Witch threw something else into the pot; and when it boiled thoroughly, there was a sound like the weeping of a crocodile. At last the draught was ready. It looked like the purest water.

"There you have it," said the Witch.

And she cut off the little mermaid's tongue, so that now the Princess was dumb, and could neither sing nor speak.

She could see her father's palace. The torches were extinguished in the great hall, and they were certainly sleeping within, but she did not dare to go to them, now that she was dumb and was about to quit them forever. She felt as if her heart would burst with sorrow. She crept into the garden, took a flower from each bed of her sisters, blew a thousand kisses toward the palace, and rose up through the dark blue sea.

The sun had not yet risen when she beheld the Prince's castle, and mounted the splendid marble staircase. The moon shone beautifully clear. The little mermaid drank the burning sharp draught, and it seemed as if a two-edged sword went through her delicate body. She fell down in a swoon, and lay as if she were dead. When the sun shone out over the sea she awoke, and felt a sharp pain; but just before her stood the handsome young Prince. He fixed his coal-black eyes upon her, so that she cast down her own, and then she perceived that her fishtail was gone, and that she had the prettiest pair of white feet a little girl could have. But she had no clothes, so she shrouded herself in her long hair. The Prince asked how she came there; and she looked at him mildly, but very mournfully, with her dark-blue eyes, for she could not speak. Then he took her by the hand, and led her into the castle. Each step she took was, as the Witch had told her, as if she had been treading on pointed needles and knives, but she bore it gladly. At the Prince's right hand she moved on, light as a soap bubble, and he, like all the rest, was astonished at her graceful, swaying movements.

She now received splendid clothes of silk and muslin. In the castle she was the most beautiful creature to be seen; but she was dumb, and could neither sing nor speak. Lovely slaves, dressed in silk and gold, stepped forward, and sang before the Prince and his royal parents; one sang more charmingly than all the rest, and the Prince smiled at her and clapped his hands. Then the little mermaid became sad; she knew that she herself had sung far more sweetly, and thought—

“O! that he only knew I had given away my voice forever to be with him!”

Now the slaves danced pretty waving dances to the loveliest music; then the little mermaid lifted her beautiful white arms, stood on the tips of her toes, and glided dancing over the floor as no one had yet danced. At each movement her beauty became more apparent, and her eyes spoke more directly to the heart than the songs of the slaves.

All were delighted, and especially the Prince, who called her his little foundling; and she danced again and again, although every time she touched the earth it seemed as if she were treading upon sharp knives. The Prince said that she should always remain with him, and she received permission to sleep on a velvet cushion before his door.

He had a page's dress made for her, that she might accompany him on horseback. They rode through the blooming woods, where the green boughs swept their shoulders, and the little birds sang in the fresh leaves. She climbed with the Prince up the high mountains, and although her delicate feet bled so that even the others could see it, she laughed at it herself, and followed him until they saw the clouds sailing beneath them, like a flock of birds traveling to distant lands.

At home in the Prince's castle, when the others slept at night, she went out on to the broad marble steps. It cooled her burning feet to stand in the cold sea water, and then she thought of the dear ones in the deep.

Once, in the nighttime, her sisters came, arm in arm. Sadly they sang as they floated above the water; and she beckoned to them, and they recognized her, and told her how she had grieved them all. Then she visited them every night; and once she saw in the distance her old grandmother, who had not been above the surface for many years, and the sea king with his crown upon his head. They stretched out their hands toward her, but did not venture so near the land as her sisters.

Day by day the Prince grew more fond of her. He loved her as one loves a dear, good child, but it never came into his head to make her his wife; and yet she must become his wife, or she would not receive an immortal soul, and would have to become foam on the sea on his marriage morning.

"Do you not love me best of them all?" the eyes of the little mermaid seemed to say, when he took her in his arms and kissed her fair forehead.

"Yes, you are the dearest to me!" said the Prince, "for you have the best heart of them all. You are the most devoted to me, and are like a young girl whom I once saw, but whom I certainly shall not find again. I was on board a ship which was wrecked. The waves threw me ashore near a holy temple, where several young girls performed the service. The youngest of them found me by the shore and saved my life. I only saw her twice: she was the only one in the world I could love; but you chase her picture out of my mind, you are so like her. She belongs to the holy temple, and therefore my good fortune has sent you to me. We will never part!"

"Ah! he does not know that I saved his life," thought the little mermaid. "I carried him over the sea to the wood where the temple stands. I sat there under the foam and looked to see if any one would come. I saw the beautiful girl whom he loves better than me." And the mermaid sighed deeply—she could not weep. "The maiden belongs to the holy temple," she said, "and will never come out into the world—they will meet no more. I am with him and see him every day; I will cherish him, love him, give up my life for him."

But now they said that the Prince was to marry, and that the beautiful daughter of a neighboring King was to be his wife, and that was why such a beautiful ship was being prepared. The story was, that the Prince traveled to visit the land of the neighboring King, but it was done that he might see the King's daughter. A great company was to go with him. The little mermaid shook her head and smiled; she knew the Prince's thoughts far better than any of the others.

"I must travel," he had said to her; "I must see the beautiful Princess: my parents desire it, but they do not wish to compel me to bring her home as my bride. I cannot love her. She is not like the beautiful maiden in the temple whom you resemble. If I were to choose a bride, I would rather choose you, my dear dumb foundling with the speaking eyes."

And he kissed her red lips and played with her long hair, so that she dreamed of happiness and of an immortal soul.

"You are not afraid of the sea, my dumb child?" said he, when they stood on the superb ship which was to carry him to the country of the neighboring King; and he told her of storm and calm, of strange fishes in the deep, and of what the divers had seen there. And she smiled at his tales, for she knew better than any one what happened at the bottom of the sea.

In the moonlight night, when all were asleep, except the steersman who stood by the helm, she sat on the side of the ship gazing down through the clear water. She fancied she saw her father's palace. High on the battlements stood her old grandmother, with the silver crown on her head, and looking through the rushing tide up to the vessel's keel. Then her sisters came forth over the water, and looked mournfully at her and wrung their white hands. She beckoned to them, smiled, and wished to tell them that she was well and happy; but the cabin boy approached her and her sisters dived down, so that he thought the white objects he had seen were foam on the surface of the water.

The next morning the ship sailed into the harbor of the neighboring King's splendid city. All the church bells sounded, and from the high towers the trumpets were blown, while the soldiers stood there with flying colors and flashing bayonets. Each day brought some festivity with it; balls and entertainments followed one another; but the Princess was not yet there. People said she was being educated in a holy temple far away, where she was learning every royal virtue. At last she arrived.

The little mermaid was anxious to see the beauty of the Princess, and was obliged to acknowledge it. A more lovely apparition she had never beheld. The Princess' skin was pure and clear, and behind the long dark eyelashes there smiled a pair of faithful, dark-blue eyes.

"You are the lady who saved me when I lay like a corpse upon the shore!" said the Prince; and he folded his blushing bride to his heart. "O, I am too, too happy!" he cried to the little mermaid. "The best hope I could have is fulfilled. You will rejoice at my happiness, for you are the most devoted to me of them all!"

And the little mermaid kissed his hand; and it seemed already to her as if her heart was broken, for his wedding morning was to bring death to her, and change her into foam on the sea.

All the church bells were ringing, and heralds rode about the streets announcing the betrothal. On every altar fragrant oil was burning in gorgeous lamps of silver. The priests swung their censers, and bride and bridegroom laid hand in hand, and received the bishop's blessing. The little mermaid was dressed in cloth of gold, and held up the bride's train; but her ears heard nothing of the festive music, her eye marked not the holy ceremony; she thought of the night of her death, and of all that she had lost in this world.

On the same evening the bride and bridegroom went on board the ship. The cannon roared, all the flags waved; in the midst of the ship a costly tent of gold and purple, with the most beautiful cushions, had been set up, and there the married pair were to sleep in the cool, still night.

The sails swelled in the wind, and the ship glided smoothly and lightly over the clear sea. When it grew dark, colored lamps were lighted and the sailors danced merry dances on deck. The little mermaid thought of the first time when she had risen up out of the sea, and beheld a similar scene of splendor and joy; and she joined in the whirling dance, and flitted on as the swallow flits away when he is pursued; and all shouted and admired her, for she had danced so prettily. Her delicate feet were cut as if with knives, but she did not feel it, for her heart was wounded far more painfully. She knew this was the last evening on which she should see him for whom she had left her friends and her home, and had given up her beautiful voice, and had suffered unheard-of pains every day, while he was utterly unconscious of all. It was the last evening she should breathe the same air with him, and behold the starry sky and the deep sea; and everlasting night without thought or dream awaited her, for she had no soul, and could win none. And everything was merriment and gladness on the ship till past midnight, and she laughed and danced with thoughts of death in her heart. The Prince kissed his beautiful bride, and she played with his raven hair, and hand in hand they went to rest in the splendid tent. It became quiet on the ship; only the helmsman stood by the helm, and the little mermaid leaned her white arms upon the bulwark and gazed out toward the east for the morning dawn—the first ray, she knew, would kill her. Then she saw her sisters rising out of the flood; they were pale, like herself; their long, beautiful hair no longer waved in the wind; it had been cut off.

‘We have given it to the Witch, that we might bring you help, so that you may not die tonight. She has given us a knife; here it is—look! how sharp! Before the sun rises you must thrust it into the heart of the Prince, and when the warm blood falls upon your feet they will grow together again into a fishtail, and you will become a mermaid again,

and come back to us, and live your three hundred years before you become dead salt sea foam. Make haste! He or you must die before the sun rises! Our old grandmother mourns so that her white hair has fallen off, as ours did under the Witch's scissors. Kill the Prince and come back! Make haste! Do you see that red streak in the sky? In a few minutes the sun will rise, and you must die!"

And they gave a very mournful sigh, and vanished beneath the waves. The little mermaid drew back the curtain from the tent, and saw the beautiful bride lying with her head on the Prince's breast; and she bent down and kissed his brow, and gazed up to the sky where the morning red was gleaming brighter and brighter; then she looked at the sharp knife, and again fixed her eyes upon the Prince, who in his sleep murmured his bride's name. She only was in his thoughts, and the knife trembled in the mermaid's hand. But then she flung it far away into the waves—they gleamed red where it fell, and it seemed as if drops of blood spurted up out of the water. Once more she looked with half-extinguished eyes upon the Prince; then she threw herself from the ship into the sea, and felt her frame dissolving into foam.

Now the sun rose up out of the sea. The rays fell mild and warm upon the cold sea foam, and the little mermaid felt nothing of death. She saw the bright sun, and over her head sailed hundreds of glorious ethereal beings—she could see them through the white sails of the ship and the red clouds of the sky; their speech was melody, but of such a spiritual kind that no human ear could hear it, just as no human eye could see them; without wings they floated through the air. The little mermaid found that she had a frame like these, and was rising more and more out of the foam.

"Whither am I going?" she asked; and her voice sounded like that of the other beings, so spiritual, that no earthly music could be compared to it.

"To the daughters of the air!" replied the others. "A mermaid has no immortal soul, and can never gain one, except she win the love of a mortal. Her eternal existence depends upon the power of another. The daughters of the air have likewise no immortal soul, but they can make themselves one through good deeds. We fly to the hot countries, where the close, pestilent air kills men, and there we bring coolness. We disperse the fragrance of the flowers through the air, and spread refreshment and health. After we have striven for three hundred years to accomplish all the good we can bring about, we receive an immortal soul, and take part in the eternal happiness of men. You, poor little mermaid, have striven with your whole heart after the goal we pursue; you have suffered and endured; you have by good works raised your-

self to the world of spirits, and can gain an immortal soul after three hundred years."

And the little mermaid lifted her glorified eyes toward God's sun, and for the first time she felt them fill with tears. On the ship there was again life and noise. She saw the Prince and his bride searching for her; then they looked mournfully at the pearly foam, as if they knew that she had thrown herself into the waves. Invisible, she kissed the forehead of the bride, fanned the Prince, and mounted with the other children of the air on the rosy cloud which floated through the ether. After three hundred years we shall thus float into Paradise!

"And we may even get there sooner," whispered a daughter of the air. "Invisibly we float into the houses of men where children are, and for every day on which we find a good child that brings joy to its parents and deserves their love, our time of probation is shortened. The child does not know when we fly through the room; and when we smile with joy at the child's conduct, a year is counted off from the three hundred; but when we see a naughty or a wicked child, we shed tears of grief, and for every tear a day is added to our time of trial."

THE BEETLE

THE EMPEROR's favorite horse was shod with gold. It had a golden shoe on each of its feet.

And why was this?

He was a beautiful creature, with delicate legs, bright intelligent eyes, and a mane that hung down his neck like a veil. He had carried his master through the fire and smoke of battle, and heard the bullets whistling around him; had kicked, bitten, and taken part in the fight when the enemy advanced; and had sprung, with his master on his back, over the fallen foe, and had saved the crown of red gold, and the life of the Emperor, which was more valuable than the red gold; and that is why the Emperor's horse had golden shoes.

And the beetle came creeping forth.

"First the great ones," said he, "and then the little ones; but greatness is not the only thing that does it." And so saying, he stretched out his thin legs.

"And pray what do you want?" asked the smith.

"Golden shoes," replied the beetle.

"Why, you must be out of your senses," cried the smith. "Do you want to have golden shoes, too?"

"Golden shoes," replied the beetle. "Am I not just as good as that big creature yonder, that is waited on, and brushed, and has meat and drink put before him? Don't I belong to the imperial stable?"

"But *why* is the horse to have golden shoes? Don't you understand that?" asked the smith.

"Understand? I understand that it is a personal slight offered to myself," cried the beetle. "It is done to annoy me, and therefore I am going into the world to seek my fortune."

"Go along!" said the smith.

"You're a rude fellow!" cried the beetle: and then he went out of the stable, flew a little way, and soon afterward found himself in a beautiful flower garden, all fragrant with roses and lavender.

"Is it not beautiful here?" asked one of the little ladybirds that flew about, with their delicate wings and their red and black shields on their backs. "How sweet it is here—how beautiful it is!"

"I'm accustomed to better things," said the beetle. "Do you call *this* beautiful? Why, there is not so much as a dungheap."

Then he went on, under the shadow of a great stack, and found a caterpillar crawling along.

"How beautiful the world is!" said the caterpillar: "the sun is so warm, and everything so enjoyable! And when I go to sleep, and die, as they call it, I shall wake up as a butterfly, with beautiful wings to fly with."

"How conceited you are!" exclaimed the beetle. "*You* fly about as a butterfly, indeed! I've come out of the stable of the Emperor, and no one there, not even the Emperor's favorite horse—that by the way wears my cast-off golden shoes—has any such idea. To have wings to fly! why we can fly now"; and he spread his wings and flew away. "I don't want to be annoyed, and yet I am annoyed," he said, as he flew off.

Soon afterward he fell down upon a great lawn. For a while he lay there and feigned slumber; at last he fell asleep in earnest.

Suddenly a shower of rain came pattering from the clouds. The beetle woke up at the noise, and wanted to escape into the earth, but could not. He was tumbled over and over: sometimes he was swimming on his stomach, sometimes on his back, and as for flying, that was out of the question; he doubted whether he should escape from the place with his life. He therefore remained lying where he was.

When the weather had moderated a little, and the beetle had rubbed the water out of his eyes, he saw something gleaming. It was linen that had been placed there to bleach. He managed to make his way up to it, and crept into a fold of the damp linen. Certainly the place was not so comfortable to lie in as the warm stable; but there was no better to be

had, and therefore he remained lying there for a whole day and a whole night, and the rain kept on during all the time. Toward morning he crept forth: he was very much out of temper about the climate.

On the linen two frogs were sitting. Their bright eyes absolutely gleamed with pleasure.

"Wonderful weather this!" one of them cried. "How refreshing! And the linen keeps the water together so beautifully. My hind legs seem to quiver as if I were going to swim."

"I should like to know," said the second, "if the swallow, who flies so far round in her many journeys in foreign lands, ever meets with a better climate than this. What delicious dampness! It is really as if one were lying in a wet ditch. Whoever does not rejoice in this, certainly does not love his fatherland."

"Have you been in the Emperor's stable?" asked the beetle. "There the dampness is warm and refreshing. That's the climate for me; but I cannot take it with me on my journey. Is there never a muck heap here in the garden, where a person of rank, like myself, can feel himself at home, and take up his quarters?"

But the frogs either did not or would not understand him.

"I never ask a question twice!" said the beetle, after he had already asked this one three times without receiving any answer.

Then he went a little further, and stumbled against a fragment of pottery, that certainly ought not to have been lying there; but as it was once there, it gave a good shelter against wind and weather. Here dwelt several families of earwigs; and these did not require much, only sociality. The female members of the community were full of the purest maternal affection, and accordingly each one considered her own child the most beautiful and clever of all.

"Our son has engaged himself," said one mother. "Dear, innocent boy! His greatest hope is that he may creep one day into a clergyman's ear. It's very artless and lovable, that; and being engaged will keep him steady. What joy for a mother!"

"Our son," said another mother, "had scarcely crept out of the egg, when he was already off on his travels. He's all life and spirits; he'll run his horns off! What joy that is for a mother! Is it not so, Mr. Beetle?" for she knew the stranger by his horny coat.

"You are both quite right," said he; so they begged him to walk in—that is to say, to come as far as he could under the bit of pottery.

"Now, you also see *my* little earwig," observed a third mother and a fourth; "they are lovely little things, and highly amusing. They are never ill-behaved, except when they are uncomfortable : their inside; but, unfortunately, one is very subject to that at their age."

Thus each mother spoke of her baby; and the babies talked among

themselves, and made use of the little nippers they have in their tails to nip the beard of the beetle.

"Yes, they are always busy about something, the little rogues!" said the mothers; and they quite beamed with maternal pride; but the beetle felt bored by it and therefore he inquired how far it was to the nearest muck heap.

"That is quite out in the big world, on the other side of the ditch," answered an earwig. "I hope none of my children will go so far, for it would be the death of me."

"But I shall try to get so far," said the beetle; and he went off without taking formal leave; for that is considered the polite thing to do. And by the ditch he met several friends—beetles, all of them.

"Here we live," they said. "We are very comfortable here. Might we ask you to step down into this rich mud? You must be fatigued after your journey."

"Certainly," replied the beetle. "I have been exposed to the rain, and have had to lie upon linen, and cleanliness is a thing that greatly exhausts me. I have also pains in one of my wings, from sitting in a draught under a fragment of pottery. It is really quite refreshing to be among one's companions once more."

"Perhaps you come from a muck heap?" observed the oldest of them.

"Indeed, I come from a much higher place," replied the beetle. "I came from the Emperor's stable, where I was born with golden shoes on my feet. I am traveling on a secret embassy. You must not ask me any questions, for I can't betray my secret."

With this the beetle stepped down into the rich mud. There sat three young maiden beetles; and they giggled, because they did not know what to say.

"Not one of them is engaged yet," said their mother; and the beetle maidens giggled again, this time from embarrassment.

"I have never seen greater beauties in the royal stables," exclaimed the beetle, who was now resting himself.

"Don't spoil my girls," said the mother; "and don't talk to them, please, unless you have serious intentions. But of course your intentions are serious, and therefore I give you my blessing."

"Hurrah!" cried all the other beetles together; and our friend was engaged. Immediately after the betrothal came the marriage, for there was no reason for delay.

The following day passed pleasantly, and the next in tolerable comfort; but on the third it was time to think of food for the wife, and perhaps for children.

"I have allowed myself to be taken in," said our beetle to himself. "And now there's nothing for it but to take *them* in, in turn."

So said, so done. Away he went, and he stayed away all day, and stayed away all night; and his wife sat there, a forsaken widow.

"O," said the other beetles, "this fellow whom we received into our family is nothing more than a thorough vagabond. He has gone away, and has left his wife a burden upon our hands."

"Well, then, she shall be unmarried again, and sit here among my daughters," said the mother. "Fie on the villain who forsook her!"

In the mean time, the beetle had been journeying on, and had sailed across the ditch on a cabbage leaf. In the morning two persons came to the ditch. When they saw him, they took him up, and turned him over, and looked very learned, especially one of them—a boy.

"Allah sees the black beetle in the black stone and in the black rock. Is not that written in the Koran?" Then he translated the beetle's name into Latin, and enlarged upon the creature's nature and history. The second person, an older scholar, voted for carrying him home. He said they wanted just such good specimens; this seemed an uncivil speech to our beetle, and in consequence he flew suddenly out of the speaker's hand. As he now had dry wings, he flew a tolerable distance, and reached a hothouse, where a sash of the glass roof was partly open, so he quietly slipped in and buried himself in the warm earth.

"Very comfortable it is here," said he.

Soon after he went to sleep, and dreamed that the Emperor's favorite horse had fallen, and had given him his golden shoes, with the promise that he should have two more.

That was all very charming. When the beetle woke up, he crept forth and looked around him. What splendor was in the hothouse! In the background great palm trees growing up on high; the sun made them look transparent; and beneath them what a luxuriance of green, and of beaming flowers, red as fire, yellow as amber, or white as fresh-fallen snow?

"This is an incomparable plenty of plants," cried the beetle. "How good they will taste when they are decayed! A capital storeroom this! There must certainly be relations of mine living here. I will just see if I can find any one with whom I may associate. I'm proud, certainly, and I'm proud of being so."

And so he prowled about in the earth, and thought what a pleasant dream that was about the dying horse, and the golden shoes he had inherited.

Suddenly, a hand seized the beetle, and pressed him, and turned him round and round.

The gardener's little son and a companion had come to the hothouse, had espied the beetle, and wanted to have their fun with him. First, he was wrapped in a vine leaf, and then put into warm trousers pocket. He

cribbled and crabbled about there with all his might; but he got a good pressing from the boy's hand for this, which served as a hint to him to keep quiet. Then the boy went rapidly toward the great lake that lay at the end-of the garden. Here the beetle was put in an old broken wooden shoe, on which a little stick was placed upright for a mast, and to this mast the beetle was bound with a woolen thread. Now he was a sailor, and had to sail away.

The lake was not very large, but to the beetle it seemed an ocean; and he was so astonished at its extent, that he fell over on his back, and kicked out with his legs.

The little ship sailed away. The current of the water seized it; but whenever it went too far from the shore, one of the boys turned up his trousers and went in after it, and brought it back to the land. But at length, just as it went merrily out again, the two boys were called away, and very harshly, so that they hurried to obey the summons, ran away from the lake, and left the little ship to its fate. Thus it drove away from the shore, farther and farther into the open sea; it was terrible work for the beetle, for he could not get away in consequence of being bound to the mast.

Then a fly came and paid him a visit.

"What beautiful weather!" said the fly. "I'll rest here, and sun myself. You've an agreeable time of it."

"You speak without knowing the facts," replied the beetle. "Don't you see that I'm a prisoner?"

"Ah! but I'm not a prisoner," observed the fly; and he flew away accordingly.

"Well, now I know the world," said the beetle to himself. "It is an abominable world: I'm the only honest person in it. First, they refuse me my golden shoes; then I have to lie on wet linen, and to stand in the draught; and to crown all, they fasten a wife upon me. Then, when I've taken a quick step out into the world, and found out how one can have it there, and how I wished to have it, one of these human boys comes and ties me up, and leaves me to the mercy of the wild waves, while the Emperor's favorite horse prances about proudly in golden shoes. That is what annoys me more than all. But one must not look for sympathy in this world! My career has been very interesting; but what's the use of that, if nobody knows it? The world does not deserve to be made acquainted with my history, for it ought to have given me golden shoes when the Emperor's horse was shod, and I stretched out my feet to be shod too. If I had received golden shoes, I should have become an ornament to the stable. Now, the stable has lost me, and the world has lost me. It is all over!"

But all was not over yet. A boat, in which there were a few young girls, came rowing up.

"Look, yonder is an old wooden shoe sailing along," said one of the girls.

"There's a little creature bound fast to it," said another.

The boat came quite close to our beetle's ship, and the young girls fished him out of the water. One of them drew a small pair of scissors from her pocket, and cut the woolen thread, without hurting the beetle; and when she stepped on shore, she put him down on the grass.

"Creep, creep—fly, fly—if thou canst," she said. "Liberty is a splendid thing."

And the beetle flew up, and straight through the open window of a great building; there he sank down, tired and exhausted, exactly on the mane of the Emperor's favorite horse, who stood in the stable when he was at home, and the beetle also. The beetle clung fast to the mane, and sat there a short time to recover himself.

"Here I'm sitting on the Emperor's favorite horse—sitting on him, just like the Emperor himself," he cried. "But what was I saying? Yes, now I remember. That's a good thought, and quite correct. The smith asked me why the golden shoes were given to the horse. Now I'm quite clear about the answer. They were given to the horse on *my* account."

And now the beetle was in a good temper again.

"Traveling expands the mind rarely," said he.

The sun's rays came streaming into the stable, and shone upon him, and made the place lively and bright.

"The world is not so bad, upon the whole," said the beetle; "but one must know how to take things as they come."

THE STRANGE GALOSHES

I

A Beginning

IN A HOUSE in Copenhagen, not far from the King's New Market, a company—a very large company—had assembled, having received invitations to an evening party there. One half of the company already sat at the card tables, the other half awaited the result of the

hostess's question, "What shall we do now?" They had progressed so far, and the entertainment began to take some degree of animation. Among other subjects the conversation turned upon the Middle Ages. Some considered that period much more interesting than our own times: yes, Councilor Knap defended this view so zealously that the lady of the house went over at once to his side; and both loudly exclaimed against Oersted's treatise in the Almanac on old and modern times, in which the chief advantage is given to our own day. The Councilor considered the times of the Danish King Hans* as the noblest and happiest age.

While the conversation takes this turn, only interrupted for a moment by the arrival of a newspaper, which contained nothing worth reading, we will wander into the vestibule, where the cloaks, sticks, and galoshes had found a place. Here sat two maids—an old one and a young one. One would have thought they had come to escort their mistresses home; but, on looking at them more closely, the observer could see that they were not ordinary servants: their shapes were too graceful for that, their complexions too delicate, and the cut of their dresses too uncommon. They were two fairies. The younger was not Fortune, but lady's-maid to one of her ladies of the bedchamber, who carry about the more trifling gifts of Fortune. The elder one looked somewhat more gloomy—she was Care, who always goes herself in her own exalted person to perform her business, for thus she knows that it is well done.

They were telling each other where they had been that day. The messenger of Fortune had only transacted a few unimportant affairs—as, for instance, she had preserved a new bonnet from a shower of rain, had procured an honest man a bow from a titled nobody, and so on; but what she had still to relate was something quite extraordinary.

"I can likewise tell," said she, "that today is my birthday; and in honor of it a pair of galoshes has been intrusted to me, which I am to bring to the human race. These galoshes have the property that every one who puts them on is at once transported to the time and place in which he likes best to be—every wish in reference to time, place, and circumstance is at once fulfilled; and so for once man can be happy here below!"

"Believe me," said Care, "he will be very unhappy, and will bless the moment when he can get rid of the galoshes again."

"What are you thinking of?" retorted the other. "Now I shall put them at the door. Somebody will take them by mistake, and become the happy one!"

You see, that was the dialogue they held.

* A. D. 1482-1513.

II

What Happened to the Councilor

It was late. Councilor Knap, lost in contemplation of the times of King Hans, wished to get home; and fate willed that instead of his own galoshes he should put on those of Fortune, and thus went out into East Street. But by the power of the galoshes he had been put back three hundred years—into the days of King Hans; and therefore he put his foot into mud and mire in the street, because in those days there was not any pavement.

"Why, this is horrible—how dirty it is here!" said the Councilor. "The good pavement is gone, and all the lamps are put out."

The moon did not yet stand high enough to give much light, and the air was tolerably thick, so that all objects seemed to melt together in the darkness. At the next corner a lamp hung before a picture of the Madonna, but the light it gave was as good as none; he only noticed it when he stood just under it, and his eyes fell upon the painted figure.

"That is probably a museum of art," thought he, "where they have forgotten to take down the sign."

A couple of men in the costume of those past days went by him.

"How they look!" he said. "They must come from a masquerade."

Suddenly there was a sound of drums and fifes, and torches gleamed brightly. The Councilor started. And now he saw a strange procession go past. First came a whole troop of drummers, beating their instruments very dexterously; they were followed by men-at-arms, with longbows and crossbows. The chief man in the procession was a clerical lord. The astonished Councilor asked what was the meaning of this, and who the man might be.

"That is the Bishop of Zealand."

"What in the world has come to the Bishop?" said the Councilor, with a sigh, shaking his head. "This can not possibly be the Bishop!"

Ruminating on this, and without looking to the right or to the left, the Councilor went through East Street, and over the Highbridge Place. The bridge which led to the Palace Square was not to be found; he perceived the shore of a shallow water, and at length encountered two people, who sat in a boat.

"Do you wish to be ferried over to the Holm, sir?" they asked.

"To the Holm!" repeated the Councilor, who did not know, you see, in what period he was. "I want to go to Christian's Haven and to Little Turf Street."

The men stared at him.

"Pray tell me where the bridge is?" said he. "It is shameful that no lanterns are lighted here; and it is as muddy, too, as if one were walking in a marsh." But the longer he talked with the boatmen the less could he understand them. "I don't understand your Bornholm talk," he at last cried, angrily, and turned his back upon them. He could not find the bridge, nor was there any paling. "It is quite scandalous how things look here!" he said—never had he thought his own times so miserable as this evening. "I think it will be best if I take a cab," thought he. But where were the cabs?—not one was to be seen. "I shall have to go back to the King's New Market, where there are many carriages standing, otherwise I shall never get as far as Christian's Haven."

Now he went toward East Street, and had almost gone through it when the moon burst forth.

"What in the world have they been erecting here!" he exclaimed, when he saw the East Gate, which in those days stood at the end of East Street.

In the mean time, however, he found a passage open, and through this he came out upon our New Market; but it was a broad meadow. Single bushes stood forth, and across the meadow ran a great canal or stream. A few miserable wooden booths for Dutch skippers were erected on the opposite shore.

"Either I behold a Fata Morgana, or I am tipsy," sighed the Councilor. "What can that be? what can that be?"

He turned back in the full persuasion that he must be ill. In walking up the street he looked more closely at the houses; most of them were built of laths, and many were only thatched with straw.

"No, I don't feel well at all!" he lamented. "And yet I only drank one glass of punch! But I cannot stand that; and besides, it was very foolish to give us punch and warm salmon. I shall mention that to our hostess—the agent's lady. Suppose I go back, and say how I feel? But that looks ridiculous, and it is a question if they will be up still."

He looked for the house, but could not find it.

"That is dreadful!" he cried; "I don't know East Street again. Not one shop is to be seen; old, miserable, tumbledown huts are all I see, as if I were at Roeskilde or Ringstedt. O, I am ill! It's no use to make ceremony. But where in all the world is the agent's house? It is no longer the same; but within there are people up still. I certainly must be ill!"

He now reached a half-open door, where the light shone through a chink. It was a tavern of that date—a kind of beer house. The room had the appearance of a Dutch wine shop; a number of people, con-

sisting of seamen, citizens of Copenhagen, and a few scholars, sat in deep conversation over their jugs, and paid little attention to the new-comer.

"I beg pardon," said the Councilor to the hostess, "but I feel very unwell; would you let them get me a fly to go to Christian's Haven?"

The woman looked at him and shook her head; then she spoke to him in German.

The Councilor now supposed that she did not understand Danish, so he repeated his wish in the German language. This and his costume, convinced the woman that he was a foreigner. She soon understood that he felt unwell, and therefore brought him a jug of water. It certainly tasted a little of sea water, though it had been taken from the spring outside.

The Councilor leaned his head on his hand, drew a deep breath, and thought of all the strange things that were happening about him.

"Is that today's number of the *Day*?" he said quite mechanically, for he saw that the woman was putting away a large sheet of paper.

She did not understand what he meant, but handed him the leaf: it was a woodcut representing a strange appearance in the air which had been seen in the city of Cologne.

"That is very old!" said the Councilor, who became quite cheerful at sight of this antiquity. "How did you come by this strange leaf? That is very interesting, although the whole thing is a fable. Nowadays these appearances are explained to be northern lights that have been seen; probably they arise from electricity."

Those who sat nearest to him and heard his speech, looked at him in surprise, and one of them rose, took off his hat respectfully, and said with a very grave face—

"You must certainly be a very learned man, sir!"

"O no!" replied the Councilor; "I can only say a word or two about things one ought to understand."

"*Modestia* is a beautiful virtue," said the man. "Moreover, I must say to your speech, '*mihi secus videtur*'; yet I will gladly suspend my *judicium*."

"May I ask with whom I have the pleasure of speaking?" asked the Councilor.

"I am a bachelor of theology," replied the man.

This answer sufficed for the Councilor; the title corresponded with the garb.

"Certainly," he thought, "this must be an old village schoolmaster, a queer character, such as one finds sometimes over in Jutland."

"This is certainly not a *locus docendi*," began the man; "but I beg

you to take the trouble to speak. You are doubtless well read in the ancients?"

"O yes," replied the Councilor. "I am fond of reading useful old books; and am fond of the modern ones, too, with the exception of the *Everyday Stories*, of which we have enough, in all conscience."

"*Everyday Stories*?" said the Bachelor, inquiringly.

"Yes, I mean the new romances we have now."

"O!" said the man, with a smile, "they are very witty, and are much read at court. The King is especially partial to the romance by Messieurs Ifven and Gaudian, which talks about King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. He has jested about it with his noble lords." *

"That I have certainly not yet read," said the Councilor: "that must be quite a new book published by Heiberg."

"No," retorted the man, "it is not published by Heiberg, but by Godfrey von Gehmen." †

"Indeed! is he the author?" asked the Councilor. "That is a very old name: was not that the name of about the first printer who appeared in Denmark?"

"Why, he *is* our first printer," replied the man.

So far it had gone well. But now one of the men began to speak of a pestilence which he said had been raging a few years ago; he meant the plague of 1484. The Councilor supposed that he meant the cholera, and so the conversation went on tolerably. The Freebooters' War of 1490 was so recent that it could not escape mention. The English pirates had taken ships from the very wharves, said the man; and the Councilor, who was well acquainted with the events of 1801, joined in manfully against the English. The rest of the talk, however, did not pass over so well; every moment there was a contradiction. The good Bachelor was terribly ignorant, and the simplest assertion of the Councilor seemed too bold or too fantastic. They looked at each other, and when it became too bad, the Bachelor spoke Latin, in the hope that he would be better understood; but it was of no use.

"How are you now?" asked the Hostess, and she plucked the Councilor by the sleeve.

Now his recollection came back; in the course of the conversation he had forgotten everything that had happened.

* Holberg relates in his *Stories of Denmark's Kings* that King Hans one day, when he had been reading in the *Romance of King Arthur*, said in jest to his boon companion, Otto Rud, whom he loved much: "These Knights, Ifven and Gaudian, whom I find in this book, must have been wonderful knights, such as one does not find nowadays"; whereupon Otto Rud replied: "If there were such a champion as King Arthur, then would you find many such knights as Ifven and Gaudian."

† The first printer and publisher in Denmark, under King Hans.

"Good heavens! where am I?" he said, and he felt dizzy when he thought of it.

"We'll drink claret, mead, and Bremen beer," cried one of the guests, "and you shall drink with us."

Two girls came in. One of them had on a cap of two colors. They poured out drink and bowed; the Councilor felt a cold shudder running all down his back. "What's that? what's that?" he cried; but he was obliged to drink with them. They took possession of the good man quite politely. He was in despair, and when one said that he was tipsy he felt not the slightest doubt regarding the truth of the statement, and only begged them to procure him a droschky. Now they thought he was speaking Muscovite.

Never had he been in such rude, vulgar company.

"One would think the country was falling back into heathenism," was his reflection. "This is the most terrible moment of my life."

But at the same time the idea occurred to him to bend down under the table, and then to creep to the door. He did so; but just as he had reached the entry the others discovered his intention. They seized him by the feet; and now the galoshes, to his great good fortune, came off, and—the whole enchantment vanished.

The Councilor saw quite plainly, in front of him, a lamp burning, and behind it a great building; everything looked familiar and splendid. It was East Street, as we know it now. He lay with his legs turned toward a porch, and opposite to him sat the watchman asleep.

"Good heavens! have I been lying here in the street dreaming?" he exclaimed. "Yes, this is East Street, sure enough! how splendidly bright and gay! It is terrible what an effect that one glass of punch must have had on me!"

Two minutes afterward he was sitting in a fly, which drove him out to Christian's Haven. He thought of the terror and anxiety he had undergone, and praised from his heart the happy present, our own time, which, with all its shortcomings, was far better than the period in which he had been placed a short time before.

III

The Watchman's Adventures

"On my word, yonder lies a pair of galoshes!" said the watchman. "They must certainly belong to the lieutenant who lives upstairs. They are lying close to the door."

The honest man would gladly have rung the bell and delivered them,

for upstairs there was a light still burning; but he did not wish to disturb the other people in the house, and so he let it alone.

"It must be very warm to have a pair of such things on," said he. "How nice and soft the leather is!" They fitted his feet very well. "How droll it is in the world! Now, he might lie down in his warm bed, and yet he does not! There he is, pacing up and down the room. He is a happy man! He has neither wife nor children, and every evening he is at a party. O, I wish I were he, then I should be a happy man!"

As he uttered the wish, the galoshes he had put on produced their effect, and the watchman was transported into the body and being of the lieutenant. Then he stood up in the room, and held a little pink paper in his fingers, on which was a poem—a poem written by the lieutenant himself. For who is there who has not, once in his life, had a poetic moment? and at such a moment, if one writes down one's thoughts, there is poetry.

O, WERE I RICH!

*"O, were I rich!" Such was my wish, yea such,
When hardly three feet high, I longed for much.*

*O, were I rich! an officer were I,
With sword, and uniform, and plume so high.
And the time came—an officer was I!*

*But yet I grew not rich. Alas, poor me!
Have pity Thou, who all men's wants dost see.*

*I sat one evening sunk in dreams of bliss,
A maid of seven years old gave me a kiss.*

*I at that time was rich in poesy
And tales of old, though poor as poor could be;
But all she asked for was this poesy.*

*Then was I rich, but not in gold, poor me!
As Thou dost know, who all men's hearts canst see.*

O, were I rich! Oft asked I for this boon.

The child grew up to womanhood full soon.

*She is so pretty, clever, and so kind;
O, did she know what's hidden in my mind—
A tale of old. Would she to me were kind!*

*But I'm condemned to silence; O, poor me!
As Thou dost know, who all men's hearts canst see.*

*O, were I rich in calm and peace of mind,
My grief you then would not here written find!*

*O thou, to whom I do my heart devote,
O, read this page of glad days now remote,
A dark, dark tale, which I to night devote!*

*Dark is the future now. Alas, poor me!
Have pity Thou, who all men's pains dost see.*

Yes, people write poetry when they are in love; but a prudent man does not print such poems. The lieutenant was in love—and poor—that's a triangle, or, so to speak, the half of a broken square of happiness. The lieutenant felt that very keenly, and so he laid his head against the window frame and sighed a deep sigh.

"The poor watchman in the street yonder is far happier than I. He does not know what I call want. He has a home, a wife and children, who weep at his sorrow, and rejoice at his joy. O! I should be happier than I am, could I change my being for his, and pass through life with his humble desires and hopes. Yes, he is happier than I!"

In that same moment the watchman became a watchman again; for through the power of the galoshes of Fortune, he had assumed the personality of the lieutenant: but then we know he felt far less content, and preferred to be just what he had despised a short time before. So the watchman became a watchman again.

"That was an ugly dream," said he, "but droll enough. It seemed to me that I was the lieutenant up yonder, and that it was not pleasant at all. I was without the wife and the boys, who are now ready to half stifle me with kisses."

He sat down again and nodded. The dream would not go quite out of his thoughts. He had the galoshes still on his feet. A falling star glided down along the horizon.

"There went one," said he, "but for all that, there are enough left. I should like to look at those things a little nearer, especially the moon, for that won't vanish under one's hands. The student for whom my wife washes, says that when we die we fly from one star to another. That's not true, but it would be very nice. If I could only make a little spring up there, then my body might lie here on the stairs for all I care."

Now there are certain assertions we should be very cautious of making in this world, but doubly careful when we have galoshes of Fortune on our feet. Just hear what happened to the watchman.

So far as we are concerned, we all understand the rapidity of dispatch by steam; we have tried it either in railways, or in steamers across the sea. But this speed is as the crawling of the sloth, or the march of the snail in comparison with the swiftness with which light travels. That flies nineteen million times quicker. Death is an electric shock we receive in our hearts, and on the wings of electricity the liberated soul flies away. The sunlight requires eight minutes and a few seconds for a journey of more than ninety-five millions of miles; on the wings of electric power the soul requires only a few moments to accomplish the same flight. The space between the orbs of the universe is, for her, not greater than, for us, the distances between the houses of our friends dwelling in the same town, and even living close together. Yet

this electric shock costs us the life of the body here below, unless, like the watchman, we have the magic galoshes on.

In a few seconds the watchman had traversed the distance of two hundred and sixty thousand miles to the moon, which body, as we know, consists of a much lighter material than that of our earth, and is, as we should say, soft as new-fallen snow. He found himself on one of the many ring mountains with which we are familiar from Dr. Mâdler's great map of the moon. Within the ring, a great bowl-shaped hollow went down to the depth of a couple of miles. At the base of the hollow lay a town, of whose appearance we can only form an idea by pouring the white of an egg into a glass of water; the substance here was just as soft as white of egg, and formed similar towers, and cupolas, and terraces like sails, transparent and floating in the thin air. Our earth hung over his head like a great, dark, red ball.

He immediately became aware of a number of beings, who were certainly what we call "men," but their appearance was very different from ours. A far more correct imagination than that of the pseudo-Herschel* had created them. If they had been put up in a row and painted, one would have said, "That's a beautiful arabesque!" They had also a language, but no one could expect that the soul of the watchman should understand it. But the watchman's soul did understand it, for our souls have far greater abilities than we suppose. Does not its wonderful dramatic talent show itself in our dreams? Then every one of our acquaintances appears, speaking in his own character, and with his own voice, in a way that not one of us could imitate in our waking hours. How does our soul bring back to us people of whom we have not thought for many years? Suddenly they come into our souls; with their smallest peculiarities about them. In fact it is a fearful thing, that memory which our souls possess; it can reproduce every sin, every bad thought. And then, it may be asked, shall we be able to give an account of every idle word that has been in our hearts and on our lips?

Thus the watchman's soul understood the language of the people in the moon very well. They disputed about this earth, and doubted if it could be inhabited; the air, they asserted, must be too thick for a sensible moon man to live there. They considered that the moon alone was peopled; for that, they said, was the real body in which the old-world people dwelt. They also talked of politics.

But let us go down to the East Street, and see how it fared with the body of the watchman.

He sat lifeless upon the stairs. His pike had fallen out of his hand,

* This relates to a book published some years ago in Germany, and said to be by Herschel, which contained a description of the moon and its inhabitants, written with such a semblance of truth that many were deceived by the imposture.

and his eyes stared up at the moon, which his honest body was wandering about.

"What time is it, watchman?" asked a passer-by. But the man who didn't answer was the watchman. Then the passengers tweaked him quite gently by the nose, and then he lost his balance. There lay the body stretched out at full length—the man was dead. All his comrades were very much frightened: dead he was, and dead he remained. It was reported, and it was discussed, and in the morning the body was carried out to the hospital.

That would be a pretty jest for the soul if it should chance to come back, and probably seek its body in the East Street, and not find it! Most likely it would go first to the police and afterward to the address office, that inquiries might be made from thence respecting the missing goods; and then it would wander out to the hospital. But we may console ourselves with the idea that the soul is most clever when it acts upon its own account; it is the body that makes it stupid.

As we have said, the watchman's body was taken to the hospital, and brought into the washroom; and naturally enough, the first thing they did there was to pull off the galoshes; and then the soul had to come back. It took its way directly toward the body, and in a few seconds there was life in the man. He declared that this had been the most terrible night of his life; he would not have such feelings again, not for a shilling; but now it was past and over.

The same day he was allowed to leave; but the galoshes remained at the hospital.

IV

A Great Moment; A Very Unusual Journey

Every one who belongs to Copenhagen knows the look of the entrance to the Frederick's Hospital in Copenhagen; but as, perhaps, a few will read this story who do not belong to Copenhagen, it becomes necessary to give a short description of it.

The hospital is separated from the street, by a tolerably high railing, in which the thick iron rails stand so far apart that certain very thin inmates are said to have squeezed between them, and thus paid their little visits outside the premises. The part of the body most difficult to get through was the head; and here, as it often happens in the world, small heads were the most fortunate. This will be sufficient as an introduction.

One of the young volunteers, of whom one could only say in one sense that he had a great head, had the watch that evening. The rain

was pouring down; but in spite of this obstacle he wanted to go out, only for a quarter of an hour. It was needless, he thought, to tell the porter of his wish, especially if he could slip through between the rails. There lay the galoshes which the watchman had forgotten. It never occurred to him in the least that they were galoshes of Fortune. They would do him very good service in this rainy weather, and he pulled them on. Now the question was whether he could squeeze through the bars; till now he had never tried it. There he stood.

"I wish to goodness I had my head outside!" cried he. And immediately, though his head was very thick and big, it glided easily and quickly through. The galoshes must have understood it well; but now the body was to slip through also, and that could not be done.

"I'm too fat," said he. "I thought my head was the thickest. I sha'n't get through."

Now he wanted to pull his head back quickly, but he could not manage it: he could move his neck, but that was all. His first feeling was one of anger, and then his spirit sank down to zero. The galoshes of Fortune had placed him in this terrible condition, and, unfortunately, it never occurred to him to wish himself free. No: instead of wishing, he only strove, and could not stir from the spot. The rain poured down; not a creature was to be seen in the street; he could not reach the gate bell, and how was he to get loose? He foresaw that he would have to remain here until the morning, and then they would have to send for a blacksmith, to file through the iron bars. But such a business is not to be done quickly. The entire charity school would be upon its legs; the whole sailors' quarter close by would come up and see him standing in the pillory; and a fine crowd there would be.

"Hu!" he cried; "the blood's rising to my head, and I shall go mad! Yes, I'm going mad! If I were free, most likely it would pass over."

That's what he ought to have said at first. The very moment he had uttered the thought his head was free; and now he rushed in, quite dazed with the fright the galoshes of Fortune had given him. But we must not think the whole affair was over; there was much worse to come yet.

The night passed away, and the following day too, and nobody sent for the galoshes. In the evening a display of oratory was to take place in an amateur theatre in a distant street. The house was crammed; and among the audience was the volunteer from the hospital, who appeared to have forgotten his adventure of the previous evening. He had the galoshes on, for they had not been sent for; and as it was dirty in the streets, they might do him good service. A new piece was recited: it was called *My Aunt's Spectacles*. These were spectacles which, when

any one put them on in a great assembly of people, made all present look like cards, so that one could prophesy from them all that would happen in the coming year.

The idea struck him; he would have liked to possess such a pair of spectacles. If they were used rightly, they would perhaps enable the wearer to look into people's hearts; and that, he thought, would be more interesting than to see what was going to happen in the next year; for future events would be known in time, but the people's thoughts never.

"Now I'll look at the row of ladies and gentlemen on the first bench; if one could look directly into their hearts! yes, that must be a hollow, a sort of shop. How my eyes would wander about in that shop! In every lady's yonder, I should doubtless find a great milliner's warehouse; with this one here, the shop is empty, but it would do no harm to have it cleaned out. But would there really be such shops? Ah, yes!" he continued, sighing, "I know one in which all the goods are first-rate, but there's a servant in it already; that's the only drawback in the whole shop! From one and another the word would be 'Please to step in!' O, that I might only step in, like a neat little thought, and slip through their hearts!"

That was the word of command for the galoshes. The volunteer shriveled up, and began to take a very remarkable journey through the hearts of the first row of spectators. The first heart through which he passed was that of a lady; but he immediately fancied himself in the Orthopedic Institute, in the room where the plaster casts of deformed limbs are kept hanging against the walls; the only difference was, that these casts were formed in the Institute when the patients came in, but here in the heart they were formed and preserved after the good persons had gone away. For they were casts of female friends, whose bodily and mental faults were preserved here.

Quickly he had passed into another female heart. But this seemed to him like a great holy church; the white dove of innocence fluttered over the high altar. Gladly would he have sunk down on his knees; but he was obliged to go away into the next heart. Still, however, he heard the tones of the organ, and it seemed to him that he himself had become another and a better man. He felt himself not unworthy to enter into the next sanctuary, which showed itself in the form of a poor garret, containing a sick mother. But through the window the warm sun streamed in, and two sky-blue birds sang full of childlike joy, while the sick mother prayed for a blessing on her daughter.

Now he crept on his hands and knees through an overfitted butcher's shop. There was meat, and nothing but meat, wherever he went. It was

the heart of a rich, respectable man, whose name is certainly to be found in the address book.

Now he was in the heart of this man's wife; this heart was an old dilapidated pigeon house. The husband's portrait was used as a mere weathercock; it stood in connection with the doors, and these doors opened and shut according as the husband turned.

Then he came into a cabinet of mirrors, such as we find in the castle of Rosenburg; but the mirrors magnified in a great degree. In the middle of the floor sat, like a Grand Lama, the insignificant *I* of the proprietor, astonished in the contemplation of his own greatness.

Then he fancied himself transported into a narrow needlecase full of pointed needles; and he thought, "This must decidedly be the heart of an old maid!" But that was not the case. It was a young officer, wearing several orders, and of whom one said, "He's a man of intellect and heart."

Quite confused was the poor volunteer when he emerged from the heart of the last person in the first row. He could not arrange his thoughts, and fancied it must be his powerful imagination which had run away with him.

"Gracious powers!" he sighed, "I must certainly have a great tendency to go mad. It is also unconscionably hot in here; the blood is rising to my head!"

And now he remembered the great event of the last evening, how his head had been caught between the iron rails of the hospital.

"That's where I must have caught it," thought he. "I must do something at once. A Russian bath might be very good. I wish I were lying on the highest board in the bathhouse." *

And there he lay on the highest board in the steambath; but he was lying there in all his clothes, in boots and galoshes, and the hot drops from the ceiling were falling on his face.

"Hi!" he cried, and jumped down to take a plunge bath.

The attendant uttered a loud cry on seeing a person there with all his clothes on. The volunteer had, however, enough presence of mind to whisper to him, "It's for a wager!" But the first thing he did when he got into his own room, was to put a big plaster on the nape of his neck, and another on his back, that they might draw out his madness.

Next morning he had a very sore back; and that was all he had got by the galoshes of Fortune.

* In these Russian (vapor) baths the person extends himself on a bank or form, and as he gets accustomed to the heat, moves to another higher up towards the ceiling, where, of course, the steam is warmest. In this manner, he ascends gradually to the highest.

V

The Transformation of the Copying Clerk

The watchman, whom we surely have not yet forgotten, in the mean time thought of the galoshes, which he had found and brought to the hospital. He took them away; but as neither the lieutenant nor any one in the street would own them, they were taken to the police office.

"They look exactly like my own galoshes," said one of the copying gentlemen,* as he looked at the unowned articles and put them beside his own. "More than a shoemaker's eye is required to distinguish them from one another."

"Mr. Copying Clerk," said a servant, coming in with some papers.

The copying clerk turned and spoke to the man: when he had done this, he turned to look at the galoshes again; he was in great doubt if the right-hand or the left-hand pair belonged to him.

"It must be those that are wet," he thought. Now here he thought wrong, for these were the galoshes of Fortune; but why should not the police be sometimes mistaken? He put them on, thrust his papers into his pocket, and put a few manuscripts under his arm, for they were to be read at home, and abstracts to be made from them. But now it was Sunday morning, and the weather was fine. "A walk to Fredericksburg would do me good," said he; and he went out accordingly.

There could not be a quieter, steadier person than this young man. We grant him his little walk with all our hearts; it will certainly do him good after so much sitting. At first he only walked like a vegetating creature, so the galoshes had no opportunity of displaying their magic power.

In the avenue he met an acquaintance, one of our younger poets, who told him that he was going to start, next day, on a summer trip.

"Are you going away again already?" asked the copying clerk. "What a happy, free man you are! You can fly wherever you like; we others have a chain to our foot."

"But it is fastened to the bread tree!" replied the poet. "You need not be anxious for the morrow; and when you grow old you get a pension."

* As on the Continent in all law and police practices nothing is verbal, but any circumstance, however trifling, is reduced to writing, the labor, as well as the number of papers that thus accumulate, is enormous. In a police office, consequently, we find copying clerks among many other scribes of various denominations, of which, it seems, our hero was one.

"But you are better off, after all," said the copying clerk. "It must be a pleasure to sit and write poetry. Everybody says agreeable things to you, and then you are your own master. Ah, you should just try it, poring over the frivolous affairs in the court."

The poet shook his head; the copying clerk shook his head also: each retained his own opinion; and thus they parted.

"They are a strange race, these poets!" thought the copying clerk. "I should like to try and enter into such a nature—to become a poet myself. I am certain I should not write such complaining verses as the rest. What a splendid spring day for a poet! The air is so remarkably clear, the clouds are so beautiful, and the green smells so sweet. For many years I have not felt as I feel at this moment."

We already notice that he has become a poet. To point this out would, in most cases, be what the Germans call "mawkish." It is a foolish fancy to imagine a poet different from other people, for among the latter there may be natures more poetical than those of many an acknowledged poet. The difference is only that the poet has a better spiritual memory: his ears hold fast the feeling and the idea until they are embodied clearly and firmly in words; and the others cannot do that. But the transition from an everyday nature to that of a poet is always a transition, and as such it must be noticed in the copying clerk.

"What glorious fragrance!" he cried. "How it reminds me of the violets at Aunt Laura's! Yes, that was when I was a little boy. I have not thought of that for a long time. The good old lady! She lies yonder by the canal. She always had a twig or a couple of green shoots in the water, let the winter be as severe as it might. The violets bloomed, while I had to put warm farthings against the frozen windowpanes to make peepholes. That was a pretty view. Out in the canal the ships were frozen in, and deserted by the whole crew; a screaming crow was the only living creature left. Then when the spring breezes blew, it all became lively: the ice was sawn asunder amid shouting and cheers, the ships were tarred and rigged, and then they sailed away to strange lands. I remained here, and must always remain, and sit at the police office, and let others take passports for abroad. That's my fate. O yes!" and he sighed deeply. Suddenly he paused. "Good Heaven! what is come to me? I never thought or felt as I do now. It must be the spring air; it is just as dizzying as it is charming!" He felt in his pockets for his papers. "These will give me something else to think of," said he, and let his eyes wander over the first leaf. There he read: "'Dame Sig-birth; an original tragedy in five acts.' What is that? And it is my own hand. Have I written this tragedy? 'The Intrigue on the Promenade; or the Day of Penance—Vaudeville.' But where did I get that from?

It must have been put into my pocket. Here is a letter. Yes, it is from the manager of the theatre; the pieces are rejected, and the letter is not at all politely worded. H'm! h'm!" said the copying clerk, and he sat down upon a bench: his thoughts were elastic; his head was quite soft. Involuntarily he grasped one of the nearest flowers; it was a common little daisy. What the botanists require several lectures to explain to us, this flower told in a minute. It told the glory of its birth; it told of the strength of the sunlight, which spread out the delicate leaves and made them give out fragrance. Then he thought of the battles of life, which likewise awaken feelings in our breasts. Air and light are the lovers of the flower, but light is the favored one. Toward the light it turned, and only when the light vanished, the flower rolled her leaves together and slept in the embrace of the air.

"It is light that adorns me!" said the flower.

"But the air allows you to breathe," whispered the poet's voice.

Just by him stood a boy, knocking with his stick upon the marshy ground. The drops of water spurted up among the green twigs, and the copying clerk thought of the millions of infusoria which were cast up on high with the drops, which was the same to them, in proportion to their size, as it would be to us if we were hurled high over the region of clouds. And the copying clerk thought of this, and of the great change which had taken place within him; he smiled. "I sleep and dream! It is wonderful though, how naturally one can dream, and yet know all the time that it is a dream. I should like to be able to remember it all clearly tomorrow when I wake. I seem to myself quite unusually excited. What a clear appreciation I have of everything, and how free I feel! But I am certain that if I remember anything of it tomorrow, it will be nonsense. That has often been so with me before. It is with all the clever famous things one says and hears in dreams, as with the money of the elves under the earth; when one receives it, it is rich and beautiful, but looked at by daylight, it is nothing but stones and dried leaves. Ah!" he sighed, quite plaintively, and gazed at the chirping birds, as they sprang merrily from bough to bough, "they are much better off than I. Flying is a noble art. Happy he who is born with wings. Yes, if I could change myself into anything, it should be into a lark."

In a moment his coat tails and sleeves grew together and formed wings; his clothes became leathers, and his galoshes claws. He noticed it quite plainly, and laughed inwardly. "Well, now I can see that I am dreaming, but so wildly I have never dreamed before." And he flew up into the green boughs and sang; but there was no poetry in the song, for the poetic nature was gone. The galoshes, like every one who wishes

to do any business thoroughly, could only do one thing at a time. He wished to be a poet, and he became one. Then he wished to be a little bird, and, in changing thus, the former peculiarity was lost.

"That is charming!" he said. "In the daytime I sit in the police office among the driest of law papers; at night, I can dream that I am flying about as a lark in the Fredericksburg Garden. One could really write quite a popular comedy upon it."

Now he flew down into the grass, turned his head in every direction, and beat with his beak upon the bending stalks of grass, which, in proportion to his size, seemed to him as long as palm branches of Northern Africa.

It was only for a moment, and then all around him became as the blackest night. It seemed to him that some immense substance was cast over him; it was a great cap, which a sailor boy threw over the bird. A hand came in and seized the copying clerk by the back and wings in a way that made him whistle. In his first terror he cried aloud, "The impudent rascal! I am copying clerk at the police office!" But that sounded to the boy only like "Piep! piep!" and he tapped the bird on the beak and wandered on with him.

In the alley, the boy met with two other boys, who belonged to the educated classes, socially speaking; but according to abilities, they ranked in the lowest class in the school. These bought the bird for a few Danish skillings; and so the copying clerk was carried back to Copenhagen.

"It's a good thing that I am dreaming," he said, "or I should become really angry. First I was a poet, and now I'm a lark! Yes, it must have been the poetic nature which transformed me into that little creature. It is a miserable state of things, especially when one falls into the hands of boys. I should like to know what the end of it will be."

The boys carried him into a very elegant room. A stout, smiling lady received them. But she was not at all gratified to see the common field bird, as she called the lark, coming in too. Only for one day she would consent to it; but they must put the bird in the empty cage which stood by the window.

"Perhaps that will please Polly," she added, and laughed at a great parrot, swinging himself proudly in his ring in the handsome brass cage.

"It's Polly's birthday," she said simply, "so the little field bird shall congratulate him."

Polly did not answer a single word; he only swung proudly to and fro. But a pretty canary, who had been brought here last summer out of his warm, fragrant fatherland, began to sing loudly.

"Screamer!" said the lady; and she threw a white handkerchief over the cage.

"Piep, piep!" sighed he; "here's a terrible snowstorm." And thus sighing, he was silent.

The copying clerk, or, as the lady called him, the field bird, was placed in a little cage close to the canary, and not far from the parrot. The only human words which Polly could say, and which often sounded very comically, were "*Come, let's be men, now!*" Everything else that he screamed out was just as unintelligible as the song of the canary, except for the copying clerk, who was now also a bird, and who understood his comrades very well.

"I flew under the green palm-tree and the blossoming almond tree!" sang the canary. "I flew with my brothers and sisters over the beautiful flowers and over the bright sea, where the plants waved in the depths. I also saw many beautiful parrots, who told the merriest stories."

"Those were wild birds," replied the parrot. "They had no education. Let us be men now! Why don't you laugh? If the lady and all the strangers could laugh at it, so can you. It is a great fault to have no taste for what is pleasant. No, let us be men now."

"Do you remember the pretty girls who danced under the tents spread out beneath the blooming trees? Do you remember the sweet fruits, and the cooling juice in the wild plants?"

"Oh, yes!" replied the parrot; "but here I am far better off. I have good care and genteel treatment. I know I've a good head, and I don't ask for more. Let us be men now. You are what they call a poetic soul. I have thorough knowledge and wit. You have genius, but no prudence. You mount up into those high natural notes of yours, and then you get covered up. That is never done to me; no, no, for I cost them a little more. I make an impression with my beak, and can cast wit round me. Come, let us be men!"

"O my poor blooming fatherland!" sang the canary. "I will praise thy dark-green trees and thy quiet bays, where the branches kiss the clear watery mirror: I'll sing of the joy of all my shining brothers and sisters, where the plants grow by the desert springs and the cactus grows."

"Now, pray leave off these dismal tones," cried the parrot. "Sing something at which one can laugh! Laughter is the sign of the highest mental development. Look if a dog or a horse can laugh! No; they can cry; but laughter—that is given to men alone. Ho, ho, ho!" screamed Polly, and finished the jest with "Let us be men now."

"You little gray northern bird," said the canary; "so you have also become a prisoner. It is certainly cold in your woods, but still liberty

is there. Fly out! they have forgotten to close your cage; the upper window is open. Fly, fly!"

Instinctively the copying clerk obeyed, and flew forth from his prison. At the same moment the half-opened door of the next room creaked, and stealthily, with fierce sparkling eyes, the house cat crept in, and made chase upon him. The canary fluttered in its cage, the parrot flapped its wings, and cried "Let us be men now." The copying clerk felt mortally afraid, and flew through the window, away over the houses and streets; at last he was obliged to rest a little.

The house opposite had a homelike look; one of the windows stood open, and he flew in. It was his own room; he perched upon the table.

"Let us be men now," he broke out, involuntarily imitating the parrot; and in the same moment he was restored to the form of the copying clerk; but he was sitting on the table.

"Heaven preserve me!" he cried. "How could I have come here and fallen so soundly asleep? It was an unquiet dream, too, that I had. The whole thing was great nonsense."

VI

The Best that the Galoshes Brought

On the following day, quite early in the morning, as the clerk still lay in bed, there came a tapping at his door: it was his neighbor who lodged on the same floor, a young theologian; and he came in.

"Lend me your galoshes," said he. "It is very wet in the garden, but the sun shines gloriously, and I should like to smoke a pipe down there."

He put on the galoshes, and was soon in the garden, which contained a plum tree and an apple tree. Even a little garden like this is highly prized in the midst of great cities.

The theologian wandered up and down the path; it was only six o'clock, and a post horn sounded out in the street.

"O, traveling, traveling!" he cried out, "that's the greatest happiness in all the world. That's the highest goal of my wishes. Then this disquietude that I feel would be stilled. But it would have to be far away. I should like to see beautiful Switzerland, to travel through Italy, to—"

Yes, it was a good thing that the galoshes took effect immediately, for he might have gone too far even for himself, and for us others too. He was traveling; he was in the midst of Switzerland, packed tightly with eight others in the interior of a diligence. He had a headache and a weary feeling in his neck, and his feet had gone to sleep, for they were

swollen by the heavy boots he had on. He was hovering in a condition between sleeping and waking. In his right-hand pocket he had his letter of credit, in his left-hand pocket his passport, and a few louis d'or were sewn into a little bag he wore on his breast. Whenever he dozed off, he dreamed he had lost one or other of these possessions; and then he would start up in a feverish way, and the first movement his hand made was to describe a triangle from left to right, and toward his breast, to feel whether he still possessed them or not. Umbrellas, hats, and walking sticks swung in the net over him, and almost took away the prospect, which was impressive enough: he glanced out at it, and his heart sang what one poet at least, whom we know, has sung in Switzerland, but has not yet printed—

*'Tis a prospect as fine as heart can desire,
Before me Mont Blanc the rough:
'Tis pleasant to tarry here and admire,
If only you've money enough.*

Great, grave, and dark was all nature around him. The pine woods looked like little mosses upon the high rocks, whose summits were lost in cloudy mists; and then it began to snow, and the wind blew cold.

"Hu!" he sighed; "if we were only on the other side of the Alps, then it would be summer, and I should have got money on my letter of credit; my anxiety about this prevents me from enjoying Switzerland. O, if I were only at the other side!"

And then he was on the other side, in the midst of Italy, between Florence and Rome. The lake Thrasymene lay spread out in the evening light, like flaming gold among the dark-blue hills. Here, where Hannibal beat Flaminius, the grape-vines held each other by their green fingers; pretty, half-naked children were keeping a herd of coal-black pigs under a clump of fragrant laurels by the wayside. If we could reproduce this scene accurately, all would cry, "Glorious Italy!" But neither the theologian nor any of his traveling companions in the carriage of the vetturino thought this.

Poisonous flies and gnats flew into the carriage by thousands. In vain they beat the air frantically with a myrtle branch—the flies stung them, nevertheless. There was not one person in the carriage whose face was not swollen and covered with stings. The poor horses looked miserable, the flies tormented them woefully, and it only mended the matter for a moment when the coachman dismounted and scraped them clean of the insects that sat upon them in great swarms. Now the sun sank down; at once an icy coldness pervaded all nature; it was like the cold air of a funeral vault after the sultry summer day; and all around the hills and clouds put on that remarkable green tone which we notice

on some old pictures, and consider unnatural unless we have ourselves witnessed a similar play of color. It was a glorious spectacle; but the stomachs of all were empty and their bodies exhausted, and every wish of the heart turned toward a resting place for the night; but how could that be won? To descry this resting place all eyes were turned more eagerly to the road than toward the beauties of nature.

The way now led through an olive wood; he could have fancied himself passing between knotty willow trunks at home. Here, by the solitary inn, a dozen crippled beggars had taken up their positions; the quickest among them looked, to quote an expression of Marryat's, like the eldest son of Famine, who had just come of age. The others were either blind or had withered legs so that they crept about on their hands, or they had withered arms with fingerless hands. This was misery in rags indeed. "*Eccellenza, miserabili!*" they sighed, and stretched forth their diseased limbs. The hostess herself, in untidy hair, and dressed in a dirty blouse, received her guests. The doors were tied up with string; the floor of the room was of brick, and half of it was grubbed up; bats flew about under the roof, and the smell within—

"Yes, lay the table down in the stable," said one of the travelers. "There, at least, one knows what one is breathing."

The windows were opened, so that a little fresh air might find its way in; but quicker than the air came the withered arms and the continual whining, "*Miserabili, Eccellenza!*" On the walls were many inscriptions; half of them were spiteful toward "*La bella Italia.*"

The supper was served. It consisted of a watery soup, seasoned with pepper and rancid oil. This last dainty played a chief part in the salad; musty eggs and roasted cockscombs were the best dishes. Even the wine had a strange taste—it was a dreadful mixture.

At night the boxes were placed against the doors. One of the travelers kept watch while the rest slept. The theologian was the sentry. O, how close it was in there! The heat oppressed him, the gnats buzzed and stung, and the *miserabili* outside moaned in their dreams.

"Yes, traveling would be all very well," said the theologian, "if one had no body. If the body could rest, and the mind fly! Wherever I go, I find a want that oppresses my heart; it is something better than the present moment that I desire. Yes, something better—the best; but what is that, and where is it? In my own heart I know very well what I want; I want to attain to a happy goal, the happiest of all."

And so soon as the word was spoken he found himself at home. The long white curtains hung down from the windows, and in the middle of the room stood a black coffin: in this he was lying in the quiet sleep of death; his wish was fulfilled—his body was at rest, and his spirit

roaming. "Esteem no man happy who is not yet in his grave," were the words of Solon; here their force was proved anew.

Every corpse is a sphinx of immortality: the sphinx here also, in the black sarcophagus, answered, what the living man had laid down two days before—

*Thou strong, stern Death! Thy silence waketh fear;
Thou leavest mould'ring gravestones for thy traces.
Shall not the soul see Jacob's ladder here?
No resurrection type but churchyard grasses?
The deepest woes escape the world's dull eye:
Thou that alone on duty's path hast sped,
Heavier those duties on thy heart would lie
Than lies the earth now on thy cofined head.*

Two forms were moving to and fro in the room. We know them both. They were the Fairy of Care and the Ambassadors of Fortune. They bent down over the dead man.

"Do you see?" said Care. "What happiness have your galoshes brought to men?"

"They have, at least, brought a permanent benefit to him who slumbers here," replied Fortune.

"Oh no!" said Care. "He went away of himself, he was not summoned. His spirit was not strong enough to lift the treasures which he had been destined to lift. I will do him a favor."

And she drew the galoshes from his feet; then the sleep of death was ended, and the awakened man raised himself up. Care vanished, and with her the galoshes disappeared too; doubtless she looked upon them as her property.

THE STEADFAST TIN SOLDIER

THERE WERE once five and twenty tin soldiers, all brothers, for they were the offspring of the same old tin spoon. Each man shouldered his gun, kept his eyes well to the front, and wore the smartest red and blue uniform imaginable. The first thing they heard in their new world, when the lid was taken off the box, was a little boy clapping his hands and crying, "Soldiers, soldiers!"

It was his birthday and they had just been given to him, so he lost no time in setting them up on the table. All the soldiers were exactly alike with one exception, and he differed from the rest in having only

one leg. For he was made last, and there was not quite enough tin left to finish him. However, he stood just as well on his one leg as the others did on two. In fact he was the very one who became famous.

On the table where they were being set up were many other toys, but the chief thing which caught the eye was a delightful paper castle. You could see through the tiny windows right into the rooms. Outside there were some little trees surrounding a small mirror, representing a lake, whose surface reflected the waxen swans which were swimming about on it. It was altogether charming, but the prettiest thing of all was a little maiden standing at the open door of the castle.

She too was cut out of paper, but she wore a dress of the lightest gauze, with a dainty little blue ribbon over her shoulders, by way of a scarf, set off by a brilliant spangle as big as her whole face. The little maid was stretching out both arms, for she was a dancer. And in the dance one of her legs was raised so high into the air that the tin soldier could see absolutely nothing of it, and supposed that she like himself had but one leg.

"That would be the very wife for me!" he thought, "but she is much too grand. She lives in a palace, while I only have a box, and then there are five and twenty of us to share it. No, that would be no place for her. But I must try to make her acquaintance!" Then he lay down full length behind a snuffbox which stood on the table. From that point he could have a good look at the lady, who continued to stand on one leg without losing her balance.

Late in the evening the other soldiers were put into their box, and the people of the house went to bed. Now was the time for the toys to play. They amused themselves with paying visits, fighting battles, and giving balls. The tin soldiers rustled about in their box for they wanted to join the games, but they could not get the lid off. The nutcrackers turned somersaults and the pencil scribbled nonsense on the slate. There was such a noise that the canary woke up and joined in, but his remarks were in verse. The only two who did not move were the tin soldier and the little dancer. She stood as stiff as ever on tiptoe, with her arms spread out. He was equally firm on his one leg, and he did not take his eyes off her for a moment.

Then the clock struck twelve, when pop! up flew the lid of the snuffbox, but there was no snuff in it. No! There was a little black goblin, a sort of jack-in-the-box.

"Tin soldier," said the goblin, "have the goodness to keep your eyes to yourself." But the tin soldier feigned not to hear.

"Ah! you just wait till tomorrow," said the goblin.

In the morning when the children got up, they put the tin soldier on the window frame, and whether it was caused by the goblin or by a

puff of wind, I do not know, but all at once the window burst open and the soldier fell head foremost from the third story.

It was a terrific descent, and he landed at last with his leg in the air and resting on his cap, with his bayonet fixed between two paving stones. The maidservant and the little boy ran down at once to look for him, but although they almost trod on him they could not see him. Had the soldier called out, "Here I am!" they would have found him. But he did not think it proper to shout when he was in uniform.

Presently it began to rain, and the drops fell faster and faster till there was a regular torrent. When it was over, two street boys came along. "Look out!" said one. "There is a tin soldier. He shall go for a sail."

So they made a boat out of a newspaper and put the soldier into the middle of it, and he sailed away down the gutter. Both boys ran alongside clapping their hands. Good heavens! what waves there were in the gutter, and what a current, but then it certainly had rained cats and dogs. The paper boat danced up and down, and now and then whirled round and round. A shudder ran through the tin soldier, but he remained undaunted and did not move a muscle. He only looked straight before him with his gun shouldered. All at once the boat drifted under a long wooden tunnel, and it became as dark as it was in his box.

"Where on earth am I going now?" thought he. "Well, well, it is all the fault of that goblin! Oh, if only the little maiden were with me in the boat, it might be twice as dark for all I should care."

At this moment a big water rat, who lived in the tunnel, came up.

"Have you a pass?" asked the rat. "Hand up your pass."

The tin soldier did not speak, but clung still tighter to his gun. The boat rushed on, the rat close behind. Phew, how he gnashed his teeth and shouted to the bits of stick and straw, "Stop him! Stop him! He hasn't paid his toll. He hasn't shown his pass."

But the current grew stronger and stronger. The tin soldier could already see daylight before him at the end of the tunnel, but he also heard a roaring sound, fit to strike terror to the bravest heart. Just imagine: where the tunnel ended, the stream rushed straight into the big canal. That would be just as dangerous for him as it would be for us to shoot a great rapid.

He was so near the end now that it was impossible to stop. The boat dashed out. The poor tin soldier held himself as stiff as he could. No one should say of him that he even winced!

The boat swirled round three or four times and filled with water to the edge; it must sink. The tin soldier stood up to his neck in water, and the boat sank deeper and deeper. The paper became limper and limper, and at last the water went over his head. Then he thought of

the pretty little dancer whom he was never to see again, and this refrain rang in his ears:

*"Onward! Onward! Soldier!
For death thou canst not shun"*

At last the paper gave way entirely and the soldier fell through, but at the same moment he was swallowed by a big fish.

Oh, how dark it was inside the fish! It was worse even than being in the tunnel. And then it was so narrow! But the tin soldier was as dauntless as ever and lay full length, shouldering his gun.

The fish rushed about and made the most frantic movements. At last it became quite quiet, and after a time a flash like lightning pierced it. The soldier was once more in the broad daylight, and someone called out loudly, "A tin soldier!" The fish had been caught, taken to market, sold, and brought into the kitchen, where the cook cut it open with a large knife. She took the soldier up by the waist with two fingers and carried him into the parlor, where everyone wanted to see the wonderful man who had traveled about in the stomach of a fish. But the tin soldier was not at all proud. They set him up on the table, and—wonder of wonders! he found himself in the very same room that he had been in before. He saw the very same children, and the toys were still standing on the table, as well as the beautiful castle with the pretty little dancer.

She still stood on one leg and held the other up in the air. You see, she also was unbending. The soldier was so much moved that he was ready to shed tears of tin, but that would not have been fitting. He looked at her and she looked at him, but they said never a word. At this moment one of the little boys took up the tin soldier, and without rhyme or reason threw him into the fire. No doubt the little goblin in the snuffbox was to blame for that. The tin soldier stood there, lighted up by the flame and in the most horrible heat, but whether it was the heat of the real fire, or the warmth of his feelings, he did not know. He had lost all his gay color. It might have been from his perilous journey, or it might have been from grief. Who can tell?

He looked at the little maiden and she looked at him, and he felt that he was melting away, but he still managed to keep himself erect, shouldering his gun bravely.

A door was suddenly opened. The draught caught the little dancer and she fluttered like a sylph, straight into the fire, to the soldier, blazed up and was gone!

By this time the soldier was reduced to a mere lump, and when the maid took away the ashes next morning she found him in the shape of

a small tin heart. All that was left of the dancer was her spangle, and that was burned as black as a coal.

THE DAISY

Now you shall hear!

Out in the country, close by the road-side, there was a country house: you yourself have certainly once seen it. Before it is a little garden with flowers, and a paling which is painted. Close by it, by the ditch, in the midst of the most beautiful green grass, grew a little daisy. The sun shone as warmly and as brightly upon it as on the great splendid garden flowers, and so it grew from hour to hour. One morning it stood in full bloom, with its little shining white leaves spreading like rays round the little yellow sun in the center. It never thought that no man would notice it down in the grass, and that it was a poor despised flower;—no, it was very merry, and turned to the warm sun, looked up at it, and listened to the lark caroling high in the air.

The little daisy was as happy as if it were a great holiday, and yet it was only a Monday. All the children were at school; and while they sat on their benches learning, it sat on its little green stalk, and learned also from the warm sun, and from all around, how good God is. And the daisy was very glad that everything that it silently felt was sung so loudly and charmingly by the lark. And the daisy looked up with a kind of respect to the happy bird who could sing and fly; but it was not at all sorrowful because it could not fly and sing also.

"I can see and hear," it thought: "the sun shines on me, and the forest kisses me. O, how richly have I been gifted!"

Within the palings stood many stiff, aristocratic flowers—the less scent they had the more they flaunted. The peonies blew themselves out to be greater than the roses, but size will not do it; the tulips had the most splendid colors, and they knew that, and held themselves bolt upright, that they might be seen more plainly. They did not notice the little daisy outside there, but the daisy looked at them the more, and thought, "How rich and beautiful they are! Yes, the pretty bird flies across to them and visits them. I am glad that I stand so near them, for at any rate I can enjoy the sight of their splendor!" And just as she thought that—"keevit!"—down came flying the lark, but not down to the peonies and tulips—no, down into the grass to the lowly daisy, which started so with joy that it did not know what to think.

The little bird danced round about it, and sang—

"O, how soft the grass is! and see what a lovely little flower, with gold in its heart and silver on its dress!"

For the yellow point in the daisy looked like gold, and the little leaves around it shone silvery white.

How happy was the little daisy—no one can conceive how happy! The bird kissed it with his beak, sang to it, and then flew up again into the blue air. A quarter of an hour passed, at least, before the daisy could recover itself. Half ashamed, yet inwardly rejoiced, it looked at the other flowers in the garden, for they had seen the honor and happiness it had gained, and must understand what a joy it was. But the tulips stood up twice as stiff as before, and they looked quite peaky in the face and quite red, for they had been vexed. The peonies were quite wrongheaded: it was well they could not speak, or the daisy would have received a good scolding. The poor little flower could see very well that they were not in a good humor, and that hurt it sensibly. At this moment there came into the garden a girl with a great sharp, shining knife; she went straight up to the tulips, and cut off one after another of them.

"O!" sighed the little daisy, "that is dreadful! Now it is all over with them."

Then the girl went away with the tulips. The daisy was glad to stand out in the grass, and to be only a poor little flower; it felt very grateful; and when the sun went down it folded its leaves and went to sleep, and dreamed all night long about the sun and the pretty little bird.

The next morning, when the flower again happily stretched out all its white leaves, like little arms, toward the air and the light, it recognized the voice of the bird, but the song he was singing sounded mournfully: Yes, the poor lark had good reason to be sad: he was caught, and now sat in a cage close by the open window. He sang of free and happy roaming, sang of the young green corn in the fields, and of the glorious journey he might make on his wings high through the air. The poor lark was not in good spirits, for there he sat a prisoner in a cage.

The little daisy wished very much to help him. But what was it to do? Yes, that was difficult to make out. It quite forgot how everything was so beautiful around, how warm the sun shone, and how splendidly white its own leaves were. Ah! it could think only of the imprisoned bird, and how it was powerless to do anything for him.

Just then two little boys came out of the garden. One of them carried in his hand the knife which the girl had used to cut off the tulips. They went straight up to the little daisy, which could not at all make out what they wanted.

"Here we may cut a capital piece of turf for the lark," said one of

the boys; and he began to cut off a square patch round about the daisy, so that the flower remained standing in its piece of grass.

"Tear off the flower!" said the other boy.

And the daisy trembled with fear, for to be torn off would be to lose its life; and now it wanted particularly to live, as it was to be given with the piece of turf to the captive lark.

"No, let it stay," said the other boy; "it makes such a nice ornament."

And so it remained, and was put into the lark's cage. But the poor bird complained aloud of his lost liberty, and beat his wings against the wires of his prison; and the little daisy could not speak—could say no consoling word to him, gladly as it would have done so. And thus the whole morning passed.

"Here is no water," said the captive lark. "They are all gone out, and have forgotten to give me anything to drink. My throat is dry and burning. It is like fire and ice within me, and the air is so close. O, I must die! I must leave the warm sunshine, the fresh green, and all the splendor that God has created!"

And then he thrust his beak into the cool turf to refresh himself a little with it. Then the bird's eye fell upon the daisy, and he nodded to it, and kissed it with his beak, and said—

"You also must wither in here, poor little flower. They have given you to me with the little patch of green grass on which you grow, instead of the whole world which was mine out there! Every little blade of grass shall be a great tree for me, and every one of your fragrant leaves a great flower. Ah, you only tell me how much I have lost!"

"If I could only comfort him!" thought the daisy.

It could not stir a leaf; but the scent which streamed forth from its delicate leaves was far stronger than is generally found in these flowers; the bird also noticed that, and though he was fainting with thirst, and in his pain plucked up the green blades of grass, he did not touch the flower.

The evening came on, and yet nobody appeared to bring the poor bird a drop of water. Then he stretched out his pretty wings and beat the air frantically with them; his song changed to a mournful piping, his little head sank down toward the flower, and the bird's heart broke with want and yearning. Then the flower could not fold its leaves, as it had done on the previous evening, and sleep; it drooped, sorrowful and sick, toward the earth.

Not till the next morn did the boys come; and when they found the bird dead they wept—wept many tears—and dug him a neat grave, which they adorned with leaves of flowers. The bird's corpse was put into a pretty red box, for he was to be royally buried—the poor bird!

While he was alive and sang they forgot him, and let him sit in his cage and suffer want; but now that he was dead he had adornment and many tears.

But the patch of turf with the daisy on it was thrown out into the highroad: no one thought of the flower that had felt the most for the little bird, and would have been so glad to console him.

THE SNOW MAN

IT is so wonderfully cold that my whole body crackles!" said the Snow Man. "This is a kind of wind that can blow life into one; and how the gleaming one up yonder is staring at me." That was the sun he meant, which was just about to set. "It shall not make *me* wink—I shall manage to keep the pieces."

He had two triangular pieces of tile in his head instead of eyes. His mouth was made of an old rake, and consequently was furnished with teeth.

He had been born amid the joyous shouts of the boys, and welcomed by the sound of sleigh bells and the slashing of whips.

The sun went down, and the full moon rose, round, large, clear, and beautiful in the blue air.

"There it comes again from the other side," said the Snow Man. He intended to say the sun is showing himself again. "Ah! I have cured him of staring. Now let him hang up there and shine, that I may see myself. If I only knew how I could manage to move from this place, I should like so much to move. If I could, I would slide along yonder on the ice, just as I see the boys slide; but I don't understand it; I don't know how to run."

"Away! away!" barked the old Yard Dog. He was quite hoarse, and could not pronounce the genuine "bow, wow." He had got the hoarseness from the time when he was an indoor dog, and lay by the fire. "The sun will teach you to run! I saw that last winter in your predecessor, and before that in *his* predecessor. Away! away! and away they all go."

"I don't understand you, comrade," said the Snow Man. "That thing up yonder is to teach me to run?" He meant the moon. "Yes, it was running itself, when I saw it a little while ago, and now it comes creeping from the other side."

"You know nothing at all," retorted the Yard Dog. "But then you've only just been patched up. What you see yonder is the moon, and the

one that went before was the sun. It will come again tomorrow, and will teach you to run down into the ditch by the wall. We shall soon have a change of weather; I can feel that in my left hind leg, for it pricks and pains me: the weather is going to change."

"I don't understand him," said the Snow Man; "but I have a feeling that he's talking about something disagreeable. The one who stared so just now, and whom he called the sun, is not my friend. I can feel that."

"Away! away!" barked the Yard Dog; and he turned round three times, and then crept into his kennel to sleep.

The weather really changed. Towards morning a thick, damp fog lay over the whole region; later there came a wind, an icy wind. The cold seemed quite to seize upon one; but when the sun rose, what splendor! Trees and bushes were covered with hoarfrost, and looked like a complete forest of coral, and every twig seemed covered with gleaming white buds. The many delicate ramifications, concealed in summer by the wreath of leaves, now made their appearance: it seemed like a lace-work, gleaming white. A snowy radiance sprang from every twig. The birch waved in the wind—it had life, like the rest of the trees in summer. It was wonderfully beautiful. And when the sun shone, how it all gleamed and sparkled, as if diamond dust had been strewn everywhere, and big diamonds had been dropped on the snowy carpet of the earth! or one could imagine that countless little lights were gleaming, whiter than ever the snow itself.

"That is wonderfully beautiful," said a young girl, who came with a young man into the garden. They both stood still near the Snow Man, and contemplated the glittering trees. "Summer cannot show a more beautiful sight," said she; and her eyes sparkled.

"And we can't have such a fellow as this in summer-time," replied the young man, and he pointed to the Snow Man. "He is capital."

The girl laughed, nodded to the Snow Man, and then danced away over the snow with her friend—over the snow that cracked and crackled under her tread as if she were walking on starch.

"Who were those two?" the Snow Man inquired of the Yard Dog. "You've been longer in the yard than I. Do you know them?"

"Of course I know them," replied the Yard Dog. "She has stroked me, and he has thrown me a meat bone. I don't bite those two."

"But what are they?" asked the Snow Man.

"Lovers!" replied the Yard Dog. "They will go to live in the same kennel, and gnaw at the same bone. Away! away!"

"Are they the same kind of beings as you and I?" asked the Snow Man.

"Why, they belong to the master," retorted the Yard Dog. "People certainly know very little who were only born yesterday. I can see that

in you. I have age and information. I know every one here in the house, and I know a time when I did not lie out here in the cold, fastened to a chain. Away! away!"

"The cold is charming," said the Snow Man. "Tell me, tell me. But you must not clank with your chain, for it jars within me when you do that."

"Away! away!" barked the Yard Dog. "They told me I was a pretty little fellow: then I used to lie in a chair covered with velvet, up in master's house, and sit in the lap of the mistress of all. They used to kiss my nose, and wipe my paws with an embroidered handkerchief. I was called 'Ami—dear Ami—sweet Ami.' But afterward I grew too big for them, and they gave me away to the housekeeper. So I came to live in the basement story. You can look into that from where you are standing, and you can see into the room where I was master; for I was master at the housekeeper's. It was certainly a smaller place than upstairs, but I was more comfortable, and was not continually taken hold of and pulled about by children as I had been. I received just as much good food as ever, and even better. I had my own cushion, and there was a stove, the finest thing in the world at this season. I went under the stove, and could lie down quite beneath it. Ah! I still sometimes dream of that stove. Away! away!"

"Does a stove look so beautiful?" asked the Snow Man. "Is it at all like me?"

"It's just the reverse of you. It's as black as a crow, and has a long neck and a brazen drum. It eats firewood, so that the fire spurts out of its mouth. One must keep at its side or under it, and there one is very comfortable. You can see it through the window from where you stand."

And the Snow Man looked and saw a bright, polished thing with a brazen drum, and the fire gleamed from the lower part of it. The Snow Man felt quite strangely; an odd emotion came over him; he knew not what it meant, and could not account for it; but all people who are not snow men know the feeling.

"And why did you leave her?" asked the Snow Man, for it seemed to him that the stove must be of the female sex. "How could you quit such a comfortable place?"

"I was obliged," replied the Yard Dog. "They turned me out-of-doors, and chained me up here. I had bitten the youngest young master in the leg, because he kicked away the bone I was gnawing. 'Bone for bone,' I thought. They took that very much amiss, and from that time I have been fastened to a chain and have lost my voice. Don't you hear how hoarse I am? Away! away! I can't talk any more like other dogs. Away! away! that was the end of the affair."

But the Snow Man was no longer listening to him. He was looking in

at the housekeeper's basement lodging, into the room where the stove stood on its four iron legs, just the same size as the Snow Man himself.

"What a strange crackling within me!" he said. "Shall I ever get in there? It is an innocent wish, and our innocent wishes are certain to be fulfilled. I must go in there and lean against her, even if I have to break through the window."

"You'll never get in there," said the Yard Dog; "and if you approach the stove you'll melt away—away!"

"I am as good as gone," replied the Snow Man. "I think I am breaking up."

The whole day the Snow Man stood looking in through the window. In the twilight hour the room became still more inviting: from the stove came a mild gleam, not like the sun nor like the moon; no, it was only as the stove can glow when he has something to eat. When the room door opened the flame started out of his mouth; this was a habit the stove had. The flame fell distinctly on the white face of the Snow Man, and gleamed red upon his bosom.

"I can endure it no longer," said he; "how beautiful it looks when it stretches out its tongue!"

The night was long; but it did not appear long to the Snow Man, who stood there lost in his own charming reflections, crackling with the cold.

In the morning the window panes of the basement lodging were covered with ice. They bore the most beautiful ice flowers that any snow man could desire; but they concealed the stove. The window panes would not thaw; he could not see the stove, which he pictured to himself as a lovely female. It crackled and whistled in him and around him; it was just the kind of frosty weather a snow man must thoroughly enjoy.

But he did not enjoy it; and, indeed, how could he enjoy himself when he was stove-sick?

"That's a terrible disease for a Snow Man," said the Yard Dog. "I have suffered from it myself, but I got over it. Away! away!" he barked; and he added, "the weather is going to change."

And the weather did change; it began to thaw. The warmth increased, and the Snow Man decreased. He made no complaint—and that's an infallible sign.

One morning he broke down. And, behold, where he had stood, something like a broomstick remained sticking up out of the ground. It was the pole around which the boys had built him up.

"Ah! now I can understand why he had such an intense longing," said the Yard Dog. "Why, there's a shovel for cleaning out the stove fastened to the pole. The Snow Man had a stove-rake in his body, and

that's what moved within him. Now he has got over that, too. Away! away!"

And soon they had got over the winter.

"Away! away!" barked the hoarse Yard Dog: but the girls in the house sang—

*"Green thyme! from your house come out;
Willow, your woolly fingers stretch out;
Lark and cuckoo, cheerfully sing,
For in February is coming the spring;
And with the cuckoo I'll sing too,
Come thou, dear sun, come out, cuckoo!"*

And nobody thought any more of the Snow Man.

THE NIGHTINGALE

IN CHINA, as you know, the Emperor is a Chinese and all the people around him are Chinese too. It is many years since the story I am going to tell you happened, but that is all the more reason for telling it, lest it should be forgotten.

The Emperor's palace was the most beautiful thing in the world. It was made entirely of finest porcelain, which was very costly, and so fragile that it could be touched only with the very greatest of care. The most extraordinary flowers were to be seen in the garden. The most beautiful ones had little silver bells tied to them which tinkled perpetually, so that no one could pass the flowers without looking at them. Every little detail in the garden had been most carefully thought out, and it was so big that even the gardener himself did not know where it ended.

If one went on walking, one came to beautiful woods with lofty trees and deep lakes. The wood extended to the sea, which was deep and blue, deep enough for large ships to sail up right under the branches of the trees. Among these trees lived a nightingale, which sang so deliciously that even the poor fisherman, who had plenty of other things to do, lay still to listen to it when he was out at night drawing in his nets.

"Heavens, how beautiful it is," he said, but then he had to attend to his business and forgot it. The next night when he heard it again he would again exclaim, "Heavens, how beautiful it is."

Travelers came to the Emperor's capital from every country in the world. They admired everything very much, especially the palace and

the gardens, but when they heard the nightingale they all said, "This is better than anything."

When they got home they described it, and learned men wrote many books about the town, the palace, and the garden. But nobody forgot the nightingale—it was always put above everything else. Those among them who were poets wrote the most beautiful poems, all about the nightingale in the woods by the deep blue sea. These books went all over the world, and in course of time some of them reached the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair reading and reading, and nodding his head, well pleased to hear such beautiful descriptions of the town, the palace, and the garden. "But the nightingale is the best of all," he read.

"What is this?" said the Emperor. "The nightingale? Why, I know nothing about it. Is there such a bird in my kingdom, and in my own garden, and I have never heard of it? Imagine my having to discover this from a book."

Then he called his gentleman-in-waiting, who was so grand that when anyone of a lower rank dared to speak to him or to ask him a question, he would only answer, "P," which means nothing at all.

"There is said to be a very wonderful bird called a nightingale here," said the Emperor. "They say that it is better than anything else in all my great kingdom. Why have I never been told anything about it?"

"I have never heard it mentioned," said the gentleman-in-waiting. "It has never been presented at court."

"I wish it to appear here this evening to sing to me," said the Emperor. "The whole world knows what I am possessed of, and I know nothing about it!"

"I have never heard it mentioned before," said the gentleman-in-waiting. "I will seek it, and I will find it." But where was it to be found? The gentleman-in-waiting ran upstairs and downstairs and in and out of all the rooms and corridors. No one of all those he met had ever heard anything about the nightingale. So the gentleman-in-waiting ran back to the Emperor and said that it must be a myth, invented by the writers of the books. "Your Imperial Majesty must not believe everything that is written! Books are often mere inventions, even if they do not belong to what we call the black art."

"But the book in which I read it was sent to me by the powerful Emperor of Japan. Therefore it can't be untrue. I will hear this nightingale. I insist upon its being here tonight. I extend my most gracious protection to it, and if it is not forthcoming, I will have the whole court trampled upon after supper."

"Tsing-pe!" said the gentleman-in-waiting, and away he ran again, up and down all the stairs, in and out of all the rooms and corridors. Half the court ran with him, for none of them wished to be trampled

on. There was much questioning about this nightingale, which was known to all the outside world but to no one at court.

At last they found a poor little maid in the kitchen, who said, "Oh heavens! The nightingale? I know it very well. Yes indeed, it can sing. Every evening I am allowed to take broken meat to my poor sick mother who lives down by the shore. On my way back, when I am tired I rest awhile in the wood, and then I hear the nightingale. Its song brings the tears into my eyes. I feel as if my mother were kissing me."

"Little kitchen maid," said the gentleman-in-waiting, "I will procure you a permanent position in the kitchen and permission to see the Emperor dining, if you will take us to the nightingale. It is commanded to appear at court tonight."

Then they all went out into the wood where the nightingale usually sang. Half the court was there. As they were going along at their best pace, a cow began to bellow.

"Oh," said a young courtier, "there we have it. What wonderful power for such a little creature. I have certainly heard it before."

"No, those are the cows bellowing. We are a long way from the place." Then frogs began to croak in the marsh.

"How beautiful!" said the Chinese chaplain. "It is just like the tinkling of church bells."

"No, those are the frogs," said the little kitchen maid. "But I think we shall soon hear it now."

Then the nightingale began to sing.

"Listen, listen! There it sits," said the little girl. And she pointed to a little gray bird up among the branches.

"Is it possible?" said the gentleman-in-waiting. "I should never have thought it was like that. How common it looks. Seeing so many grand people must have frightened all its colors away."

"Little nightingale," called the kitchen maid quite loud, "Our Gracious Emperor wishes you to sing to him."

"With the greatest pleasure," said the nightingale, warbling away in the most delightful fashion.

"It is just like crystal bells," said the gentleman-in-waiting. "Look at its little throat, how active it is. It is extraordinary that we have never heard it before. I am sure it will be a great success at court."

"Shall I sing again to the Emperor?" said the nightingale, who thought he was present.

"My precious little nightingale," said the gentleman-in-waiting, "I have the honor to command your attendance at a court festival tonight, where you will charm His Gracious Majesty the Emperor with your fascinating singing."

"It sounds best among the trees," said the nightingale, but it went with them willingly when it heard that the Emperor wished it.

The palace had been brightened up for the occasion. The walls and the floors, which were all of china, shone by the light of many thousand golden lamps. The most beautiful flowers, all of the tinkling kind, were arranged in the corridors. There was hurrying to and fro, and a great draught, but this was just what made the bells ring. One's ears were full of the tinkling. In the middle of the large reception room where the Emperor sat, a golden rod had been fixed, on which the nightingale was to perch. The whole court was assembled, and the little kitchen maid had been permitted to stand behind the door, as she now had the actual title of Cook. They were all dressed in their best. Everybody's eyes were turned towards the little gray bird at which the Emperor was nodding.

The nightingale sang delightfully, and the tears came into the Emperor's eyes and rolled down his cheeks. And when the nightingale sang more beautifully than ever, its notes melted all hearts. The Emperor was so charmed that he said the nightingale should have his gold slipper to wear round its neck. But the nightingale declined with thanks—it had already been sufficiently rewarded.

"I have seen tears in the eyes of the Emperor," he said. "That is my richest reward. The tears of an Emperor have a wonderful power. God knows I am sufficiently recompensed." And it again burst into its sweet heavenly song.

"That is the most delightful coquetting I have ever seen!" said the ladies. And they took some water into their mouths to try and make the same gurgling, when anyone spoke to them, thinking so to equal the nightingale. Even the lackeys and the chambermaids announced that they were satisfied, and that is saying a great deal. They are always the most difficult people to please. Yes indeed, the nightingale had made a sensation. It was to stay at court now, and have its own cage, as well as liberty to walk out twice a day and once in the night. It always had twelve footmen, with each one holding a ribbon which was tied round its leg. There was not much pleasure in an outing of that sort.

The whole town talked about the marvelous bird. If two people met, one said to the other "Night," and the other answered "Gale." And then they sighed, perfectly understanding each other. Eleven cheesemongers' children were named after it, but not one among them could sing anything.

One day a large parcel came for the Emperor. Outside was written the word "Nightingale."

"Here we have another new book about this celebrated bird," said the Emperor. But it was not a book. It was a little work of art in a box, an artificial nightingale exactly like the living one, except that it was studded all over with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires.

When the artificial bird was wound up, it could sing one of the songs the real one sang. and it wagged its tail, which glittered with silver and

gold. A ribbon was tied round its neck on which was written, "The Emperor of Japan's nightingale is very poor compared to the Emperor of China's."

Everybody said, "Oh, how beautiful!" And the person who brought the artificial bird immediately received the title of Imperial Nightingale-Carrier-in-Chief.

"Now, they must sing together. What a duet that will be!"

Then they had to sing together, but they did not get on very well, for the real nightingale sang in its own way and the artificial one could only sing waltzes.

"There is no fault in that," said the music master. "It is perfectly in time and correct in every way."

Then the artificial bird had to sing alone. It was just as great a success as the real one, and it was much prettier to look at, because it glittered like bracelets and breastpins.

It sang the same tune three and thirty times over, and yet it was not tired. People would willingly have heard it from the beginning again, but the Emperor said that the real one must have a turn now. But where was it? No one had noticed that it had flown out of the open window, back to its own green woods.

"What is the meaning of this?" said the Emperor.

All the courtiers railed at it and said it was a most ungrateful bird.

"We have got the best bird though," said they, and then the artificial bird had to sing again. This was the thirty-fourth time that they had heard the same tune, but they did not know it thoroughly even yet because it was so difficult.

The music master praised the bird tremendously and insisted that it was better than the real nightingale, not only on the outside with all its diamonds, but inside too.

"You see, my ladies and gentlemen, and the Emperor before all, in the real nightingale you never know what you will hear, but in the artificial one everything is decided beforehand. So it is, and so it must remain. It can't be otherwise. You can account for things: you can open it and show the human ingenuity in arranging how the waltzes go, and how one note follows upon another."

"Those are exactly my opinions," they all said, and the music master got leave to show the bird to the public next Sunday. They were also to hear it sing, said the Emperor. So they heard it, and all became as enthusiastic over it as if they had drunk themselves merry on tea, because that is a thoroughly Chinese habit.

Then they all said, "Oh!" and stuck their forefingers in the air and nodded their heads. But the poor fisherman who had heard the real nightingale said, "It sounds very nice, and it is very nearly like the

real one, but there is something wanting. I don't know what." The real nightingale was banished from the kingdom.

The artificial bird had its place on a silken cushion, close to the Emperor's bed. All the presents it had received of gold and precious jewels were scattered round it. Its title had risen to be Chief Imperial Singer-of-the-Bed-Chamber. In rank it stood number one on the left side, for the Emperor reckoned that side where the heart was seated was the important one. And even an Emperor's heart is on the left side.

The music master wrote five and twenty volumes about the artificial bird. The treatise was very long, and was written in all the most difficult Chinese characters. Everybody said they had read and understood it, for otherwise they would have been reckoned stupid, and then their bodies would have been trampled upon.

Things went on in this way for a whole year. The Emperor, the court, and all the other Chinese knew every little gurgle in the song of the artificial bird by heart. But they liked it all the better for this, and they could all join in the song themselves. Even the street boys sang "Zizizi! cluck, cluck, cluck!" And the Emperor sang it too.

But one evening, when the bird was singing its best and the Emperor was lying in bed listening to it, something gave way inside the bird with a "whizz." "Whirr!" went all the wheels, and the music stopped.

The Emperor jumped out of bed and sent for his private physicians, but what good could they do? Then they sent for the watchmaker, who after a good deal of talk and examination got the works to go again somehow. But he said the bird would have to be spared as much as possible, because it was so worn out, and that he could not renew the works so as to be sure of the tune. This was a great blow! They now dared to let the artificial bird sing only once a year, and hardly that. But then the music master made a little speech using all the most difficult Chinese words. He said it was just as good as ever, and his saying it made it so.

Five years passed, and then a great grief came upon the nation. They were all very fond of their Emperor, and now he was ill and could not live, it was said. A new Emperor was already chosen, and people stood about in the street and asked the gentleman-in-waiting how the Emperor was getting on.

"P," answered he, shaking his head.

The Emperor lay pale and cold in his gorgeous bed. The courtiers thought he was dead, and they all went off to pay their respects to their new Emperor. The lackeys ran off to talk matters over, and the chambermaids gave a great coffee party. Cloth had been laid down in all the rooms and corridors so as to deaden the sounds of footsteps, so it was very, very quiet. But the Emperor was not dead yet. He lay stiff and

pale in the gorgeous bed with velvet hangings and heavy golden tassels. There was an open window high above him, and the moon streamed in upon the Emperor and the artificial bird beside him.

The poor Emperor could hardly breathe. He seemed to have a weight on his chest. He opened his eyes and then he saw that it was Death sitting upon his chest, wearing his golden crown. In one hand he held the Emperor's golden sword, and in the other his Imperial banner. From among the folds of the velvet hangings peered many curious faces. Some were hideous, others gentle and pleasant. They were all the Emperor's good and bad deeds, which now looked him in the face when Death was weighing him down.

"Do you remember that?" whispered one after the other. "Do you remember this?" And they told him so many things that the perspiration poured down his face.

"I never knew that," said the Emperor. "Music, music! Sound the great Chinese drums," he cried, "that I may not hear what they are saying." But they went on and on, and Death sat nodding his head like a Chinese at everything that was said. "Music, music!" shrieked the Emperor. "You precious little golden bird, sing, sing! I have loaded you with precious stones, and even hung my own golden slipper round your neck. Sing, I tell you, sing!"

But the bird stood silent. There was nobody to wind it up, so of course it could not go. Death continued to fix the great empty sockets of its eyes upon him, and all was silent, terribly silent.

Suddenly, close to the window there was a burst of lovely song. It was the living nightingale, perched on a branch outside. It had heard of the Emperor's need and had come to bring comfort and hope to him. As it sang, the faces round became fainter and fainter, and the blood coursed with fresh vigor in the Emperor's veins and through his feeble limbs. Even Death himself listened to the song and said, "Go on, little nightingale, go on!"

"Yes, if you give me the gorgeous golden sword. Yes, if you give me the Imperial banner. Yes, if you give me the Emperor's crown."

And Death gave back each of these treasures for a song, and the nightingale went on singing. It sang about the quiet churchyard where the roses bloom, where the elder flowers scent the air, and where the fresh grass is ever moistened anew by the tears of the mourners. This song brought to Death a longing for his own garden, and like a cold gray mist he passed out of the window.

"Thanks, thanks!" said the Emperor. "You heavenly little bird, I know you. I banished you from my kingdom, and yet you have charmed the evil visions away from my bed by your song, and even Death away from my heart. How can I ever repay you?"

"You have rewarded me," said the nightingale. "I brought tears to your eyes the very first time I ever sang to you, and I shall never forget it. Those are the jewels which gladden the heart of a singer. But sleep now, and wake up fresh and strong. I will sing to you."

Then it sang again, and the Emperor fell into a sweet refreshing sleep. The sun shone in at his window, and he awoke refreshed and well. None of his attendants had yet come back to him, for they thought he was dead, but the nightingale still sat there singing.

"You must always stay with me," said the Emperor. "You shall sing only when you like, and I will break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces."

"Don't do that," said the nightingale. "It did all the good it could. Keep it as you have always done. I can't build my nest and live in this palace, but let me come whenever I like. Then I will sit on the branch in the evening and sing to you. I will sing to cheer you and to make you thoughtful too. I will sing to you of the happy ones and of those that suffer. I will sing about the good and the evil, which are kept hidden from you. The little singing bird flies far and wide, to the poor fisherman and to the peasant's home, to numbers who are far from you and your court. I love your heart more than your crown, and yet there is an odor of sanctity round the crown too! I will come, and I will sing to you. But you must promise me one thing."

"Everything!" said the Emperor, who stood there in his imperial robes which he had just put on, and he held the sword heavy with gold upon his heart.

"Only one thing I ask you. Tell no one that you have a little bird who tells you everything. It will be better so."

Then the nightingale flew away. The attendants came in to look after their dead Emperor—and there he stood, bidding them "Good morning!"

THE SILVER SHILLING

THERE WAS once a shilling. He came out quite bright from the mint, and sprang up, and sang out, "Hurrah! now I'm off into the wide world." And into the wide world he certainly went.

The child held him with soft, warm hands; the miser clutched him in a cold, avaricious palm; the old man turned him goodness knows how many times before parting with him; while careless youth rolled him lightly away. The shilling was of silver, and had very little copper about

him: he had been now a whole year in the world—that is to say, in the country in which he had been struck. But one day he started on his foreign travels; he was the last native coin in the purse borne by his traveling master. The gentleman was himself not aware that he still had this coin until he came across it by chance.

“Why, here’s a shilling from home left to me,” he said. “Well, he can make the journey with me.”

And the shilling rattled and jumped for joy as it was thrust back into the purse. So here it lay among strange companions, who came and went, each making room for a successor; but the shilling from home always remained in the bag; which was a distinction for it.

Several weeks had gone by, and the shilling had traveled far out into the world without exactly knowing where he was, though he learned from the other coins that they were French or Italian. One said they were in such and such a town, another that they had reached such and such a spot; but the shilling could form no idea of all this. He who has his head in a bag sees nothing; and this was the case with the shilling. But one day, as he lay there, he noticed that the purse was not shut, and so he crept forward to the opening, to take a look around. He ought not to have done so; but he was inquisitive, and people often have to pay for that. He slipped out into the fob; and when the purse was taken out at night the shilling remained behind, and was sent out into the passage with the clothes. There he fell upon the floor: no one heard it, no one saw it.

Next morning the clothes were carried back into the room; the gentleman put them on, and continued his journey, while the shilling remained behind. The coin was found, and was required to go into service again, so he was sent out with three other coins.

“It is a pleasant thing to look about one in the world,” thought the shilling, “and to get to know strange people and foreign customs.”

And now began the history of the shilling, as told by himself.

“‘Away with him! he’s bad—no use.’ These words went through and through me,” said the shilling. “I know I sounded well and had been properly coined. The people were certainly mistaken. They could not mean me. But, yes, they did mean me: I was the one of whom they said, ‘He’s bad—he’s no good.’ ‘I must get rid of that fellow in the dark,’ said the man who had received me; and I was passed at night, and abused in the daytime. ‘Bad—no good!’ was the cry: ‘we must make haste and get rid of him.’”

“And I trembled in the fingers of the holder each time I was to be secretly passed on as a coin of the country.

“What a miserable shilling I am! Of what use is my silver to me, my value, my coinage, if all these things are looked on as worthless? In the eyes of the world one has only the value the world chooses to put upon

one. It must be terrible indeed to have a bad conscience, and to creep along on evil ways, if I, who am quite innocent, can feel so badly because I am only thought guilty.

"Each time I was brought out I shuddered at the thought of the eyes that would look at me, for I knew that I should be rejected and flung back upon the table, like an impostor and a cheat. Once I came into the hands of a poor old woman, to whom I was paid for a hard day's work, and she could not get rid of me at all. No one would accept me, and I was a perfect curse to the old lady.

"I shall certainly be forced to deceive some one with this shilling," she said; "for, with the best will in the world, I can't hoard up a false shilling. The rich baker shall have him; he will be able to bear the loss—but it's wrong in me to do it, after all."

"And I must lie heavy on that woman's conscience too," sighed I. "Am I really so much changed in my old age?"

"And the woman went her way to the rich baker; but he knew too well what kind of shillings would pass to take me, and he threw me back at the woman, who got no bread for me. And I felt miserably low to think that I should be the cause of distress to others—I who had been in my young days so proudly conscious of my value and of the correctness of my mintage. I became as miserable as a poor shilling can be whom no one will accept; but the woman took me home again, and looked at me with a friendly, hearty face, and said—

"No, I will not deceive any one with thee. I will bore a hole through thee, that every one may see thou art a false thing. And yet—it just occurs to me—perhaps this is a lucky shilling; and the thought comes so strongly upon me that I am sure it must be true! I will make a hole through the shilling, and pass a string through the hole, and hang the coin round the neck of my neighbor's little boy for a lucky shilling."

"So she bored a hole through me. It is certainly not agreeable to have a hole bored through one; but many things can be borne when the intention is good. A thread was passed through the hole, and I became a kind of medal, and was hung round the neck of the little child; and the child smiled at me, and kissed me, and I slept all night on its warm, innocent neck.

"When the morning came, the child's mother took me up in her fingers and looked at me, and she had her own thoughts about me—I could feel that very well. She brought out a pair of scissors, and cut the string through.

"A lucky shilling!" she said. "Well, we shall soon see that."

"And she laid me in vinegar, so that I turned quite green. Then she plugged up the hole, and carried me, in the evening twilight, to the lottery collector, to buy a lottery ticket that should bring her luck.

· “How miserably wretched I felt! There was a stinging feeling in me as if I should crumble to bits. I knew that I should be called false and thrown down—and before a crowd of other shillings and coins, too, who lay there with an image and inscription of which they might be proud. But I escaped that disgrace, for there were many people in the collector’s room—he had a great deal to do, and I went rattling down into the box among the other coins. Whether my ticket won anything or not I don’t know; but this I do know, that the very next morning I was recognized as a bad shilling, and was sent out to deceive and deceive again. That is a very trying thing to bear when one knows one has a good character, and of that I *am* conscious.

“For a year and a day I thus wandered from house to house and from hand to hand, always abused, always unwelcome: no one trusted me; and I lost confidence in the world and in myself. It was a heavy time. At last, one day a traveler, a strange gentleman, arrived, and I was passed to him, and he was polite enough to accept me for current coin; but he wanted to pass me on, and again I heard the horrible cry, ‘No use—false!’

“‘I received it as a good coin,’ said the man, and he looked closely at me: suddenly he smiled all over his face; and I had never seen that expression before on any face that looked at me. ‘Why, what ever is that?’ he said. ‘That’s one of our own country coins, a good honest shilling from my home, and they’ve bored a hole through him, and they call him false. Now, this is a curious circumstance. I must keep him and take him home with me.’

“A glow of joy thrilled through me when I heard myself called a good honest shilling; and now I was to be taken home, where each and every one would know me, and be sure that I was real silver and properly coined. I could have thrown out sparks for very gladness; but, after all, it’s not in my nature to throw out sparks, for that’s the property of steel, not of silver.

“I was wrapped up in clean white paper, so that I should not be confounded with the other coins, and spent; and on festive occasions, when fellow-countrymen met together, I was shown about, and they spoke very well of me: they said I was interesting—and it is wonderful how interesting one can be without saying a single word.

“And at last I got home again. All my troubles were ended, joy came back to me, for I was of good silver, and had the right stamp, and I had no more disagreeables to endure, though a hole had been bored through me, as through a false coin: but that does not matter if one is not really false. One must wait for the end, and one will be righted at last—that’s my belief,” said the shilling.

THE NAUGHTY BOY

THERE WAS once an old poet—a very good old poet. One evening, as he sat at home, there was very bad weather without. The rain streamed down; but the old poet sat comfortably by his stove, where the fire was burning and the roasting apples hissing.

"There won't be a dry thread left on the poor people who are out in this weather!" said he, for he was a good old poet.

"O, open to me! I'm cold and quite wet," said a little child outside; and it cried, and knocked at the door, while the rain streamed down, and the wind made all the casements rattle.

"You poor little creature!" said the poet; and he went to open the door. There stood a little boy; he was quite naked, and the water ran in streams from his long fair curls. He was shivering with cold, and had he not been let in, he would certainly have perished in the bad weather.

"You little creature!" said the poet, and took him by the hand, "come to me, and I will warm you. You shall have wine and an apple, for you are a capital boy."

And so he was. His eyes sparkled like two bright stars, and though the water ran down from his fair curls, they fell in beautiful ringlets. He looked like a little angel-child, but was white with cold, and trembled all over. In his hand he carried a famous bow, but it looked quite spoiled by the wet; all the colors in the beautiful arrows had been blurred together by the rain.

The old poet sat down by the stove, took the little boy on his knees, pressed the water out of the long curls, warmed his hands in his own, and made him some sweet wine-whey; then the boy recovered himself, and his cheeks grew red, and he jumped to the floor, and danced round the old poet.

"You are a merry boy," said the old poet. "What is your name?"

"My name is Love," he replied: "don't you know me? There lies my bow—I shoot with that, you may believe me! See, now the weather is clearing up outside, and the moon shines."

"But your bow is quite spoiled," said the good old poet.

"That would be a pity," replied the little boy; and he took the bow and looked at it. "O, it is quite dry, and has suffered no damage; the string is quite stiff—I will try it!" Then he bent it, and laid an arrow across, aimed, and shot the good old poet straight through the heart. "Do you see now that my bow was not spoiled?" said he, and laughed out loud and ran away. What a naughty boy, to shoot at the old poet in that

way, who had admitted him into the warm room, and been so kind to him, and given him the best wine and the best apple!

The good poet lay upon the floor and wept; he was really shot straight into the heart. "Fie!" he cried, "what a naughty boy this Love is! I shall tell that to all good children, so that they may take care and never play with him, for he will do them a hurt!"

All good children, girls and boys, to whom he told this, took good heed of this naughty Love; but still he tricked them, for he is very cunning. When the students come out from the lectures, he runs at their side with a book under his arm, and has a black coat on. They cannot recognize him at all. And then they take his arm, and fancy he is a student too; but he thrusts the arrow into their breasts. Yes, he is always following people! He sits in the great chandelier in the theatre, and burns brightly so that the people think he is a lamp; but afterwards they see their error. He runs about in the palace garden and on the promenades. Yes, he once shot your father and your mother straight through the heart! Only ask them, and you will hear what they say. O, he is a bad boy, this Love; you must never have anything to do with him. He is after every one. Only think, once he shot an arrow at old grandmamma; but that was a long time ago. The wound has indeed healed long since, but she will never forget it. Fie on that wicked Love! But now you know him, and what a naughty boy he is.

THE TOAD

THE WELL was deep, and so the rope was long, and the wheel went heavily round, before one could hoist the bucket over the side of the well. The sun could not see its face in the water, however brightly it shone; but as far as it could shine there were green weeds growing between the stones.

A family of the toad race dwelt here. They were emigrants; indeed, they had all come plump down in the person of the old toad mother, who was still alive. The green frogs who swam in the water, had been at home here ever so much longer, but they acknowledged their cousins, and called them the "well guests." The latter, however, had no thoughts of ever flitting; they made themselves very comfortable here on the dry land, as they called the wet stones.

Dame Frog had once traveled, riding in the bucket as it went up; but the light was too much for her, and gave her spasm in the eyes; luckily she got out of the bucket. She fell with a frightful splash in the water,

and lay up for three days with the backache. She had not much to tell about the upper world, but one thing she did know, and so did all the others now—that the well was not the whole world. Dame Toad might have told them a thing or two more, but she never answered any questions, and so they left off asking any.

"Nasty, ugly, squat, and fat she is!" said the young green frogs; "and her brats are getting just like her."

"Maybe so!" said Dame Toad, "but one of them has a jewel in its head, or else I have it myself."

The green frogs listened and stared, and as they did not like to hear that, they made faces and went to the bottom. But the young toads stretched their hindlegs out of sheer pride. Each of them thought it had the jewel, and so they all kept their heads quite still; but at last they began to ask what sort of a thing they had to be proud of, and what a jewel *was* exactly.

"It is something so splendid and so precious," said Dame Toad, "that I cannot describe it; it is something that one wears to please one's self, and that others fret to death after. But don't ask questions; I shan't answer them."

"Well, I have not got the jewel," said the smallest toad, which was ugly as ugly could be. "How should I have anything so splendid? and if it vexed others, why, it could not please me. No; all I want is to get up to the well side, and have one peep out; that would be glorious!"

"Better stay where you are," said the old one. "Here you are at home, and you know what it's like. Keep clear of the bucket, or it may squash you. And even if you get safe into it, you may fall out again, and it is not every one that can fall so luckily as I did, and keep legs and eggs all safe and sound."

"Quack!" said the little one; and that means the same as when we men say "Alack!"

It did so long to get up to the well side, and look out; it felt quite a yearning after the green things up yonder. And so, next morning, as the bucket was going up, when it happened to stop for an instant before the stone where the toad sat, the little creature quivered through and through, and edged into the bucket. It sank to the bottom of the water, which was presenly drawn up and poured out.

"Phuh, botheration!" said the man, when he saw it; "it is the ugliest I have ever seen." He kicked with his wooden shoe at the toad, which was near being crippled, but managed to escape into the middle of some tall stinging nettles. It saw stalks side by side around it, and it looked upward too. The sun shone on the leaves; they were quite transparent. For the toad it was the same as it is for us men when we come all at

once into a great forest, where the sun is shining between leaves and branches.

"It is much prettier here than down in the well! One might well stop here for one's whole lifetime," said the little toad. It lay there one hour, it lay there two. "Now I wonder what there is outside; as I have gone so far, I may as well go further." And it crawled as fast as it could crawl, till it came out into the full sunshine, and got powdered with dust, as it marched across a high road.

"This is something like being on dry land," said the toad. "I am getting almost too much of a good thing; it tickles right into me."

Now it came to a ditch; the forget-me-not grew here, and the meadow-sweet; beyond it was a hedge of white-thorn and elder bushes, and the convolvulus crept and hung about it. Here were fine colors to be seen! And yonder flew a butterfly. The toad thought that it was a flower which had broken loose, in order to look about it in the world; it really seemed so very natural.

"If one could only get along like that!" said the toad. "Quack—alack, O how glorious!"

For eight days and nights it lingered by the ditch, and felt no want of food. The ninth day it thought, "Further—forward!" But was there anything more beautiful to be found then? perhaps a little toad, or some green frogs; there had been a sound in the wind last night, as if there were "cousins" in the neighborhood.

"It is a fine thing to live! to come up out of the well; to lie in stinging nettles; to creep along a dusty road; and to rest in a wet ditch! But forward still! let us find out frogs or a little toad; one cannot do without them, after all; nature, by itself, is not enough for one!" And so it set out again on its wanderings.

It came to a field and a large pond, with rushes round it; it took a look inside.

"It is too wet for you here, isn't it?" said the frogs, "but you are quite welcome. Are you a he or a she?—not that it matters, you are welcome all the same."

And so it was invited to a concert in the evening—a family concert, great excitement and thin voices! we all know that sort of thing. There were no refreshments, except drink; but that was free to all—the whole pond, if they pleased.

"Now I shall travel further," said the little toad. It was always craving after something better.

It saw the stars twinkle, so large and so clear; it saw the new moon shine; it saw the sun rise higher and higher.

"I think I am still in the well, in a larger well: I must get higher up! I feel a restlessness, a longing!" And when the moon had grown full

and round, the poor creature thought, "Can *that* be the bucket which is being let down, and which I must pop into if I wish to get higher up? Or is the sun the great bucket? How great it is and how beaming! It could hold all of us together. I must watch for my opportunity. What a brightness in my head! I do not believe that the jewel can shine better. The jewel! I have it not, and shall not cry after it. No; higher still in glitter and gladness! I feel an assurance, and yet a fear; it is a hard step to take, but it must be taken. Forward! right on along the high road!"

And it stepped out as well as such a crawling creature can, till it came to the great thoroughfare, where the men lived. Here there were flower gardens and cabbage gardens. It turned aside to rest in a cabbage garden.

"What a number of different beings there are, which I know nothing about! and how great and blessed is the world! But one must keep looking about one, instead of sitting always in the same corner." And so it sidled into the cabbage garden. "How green it is here! how pretty it is here!"

"That I know well enough," said the caterpillar, on the leaf. "My leaf is the largest here; it covers half the world—but as for the world, I can do without it."

"Cluck! cluck!" said somebody, and fowls came tripping into the cabbage garden. The foremost hen was farsighted; she spied out the worm on the curly leaf, and pecked at it, so that it fell to the ground, where it lay twisting and turning. The hen looked first with one eye and then with the other, for she could not make out what was to be the end of all this wriggling.

"It does not do this of its own accord," thought the hen, and lifted her head for a finishing stroke. The toad grew so frightened, that it crawled right up against the hen.

"So it has friends to fight for it," said she; "just look at the crawler!" and the hen turned tail. "I shan't trouble myself about the little green mouthful; it only gives one a tickling in the throat." The other fowls were of the same opinion, and away they went.

"I have wriggled away from her," said the caterpillar; "it is good to have presence of mind, but the hardest task remains, to get up on my cabbage leaf. Where is it?"

And the little toad came forward and expressed its sympathies. It was glad of its own ugliness, that had frightened away the hen.

"What do you mean by that?" asked the caterpillar. "I got rid of her myself, I tell you. You are very unpleasant to look at! Mayn't I be allowed to get back into my own? Now I smell cabbage. Now I am near

my leaf. There is nothing so beautiful as what is one's own. I must go higher up still."

"Yes, higher up!" said the little toad, "higher up! it feels just as I feel; but it is not in good humor today; that comes of the fright. We all wish to get higher up." And it looked up as high as it could.

The stork sat in his nest on the farmer's roof; he clattered, and the stork mother clattered.

"How high they live," thought the toad. "Pity that one can't get up there!"

There were two young students lodging in the farmhouse; one of them was a poet, the other a naturalist. The one sang and wrote in gladness of all that God had created, even as its image was reflected in his heart; he sang it out short and clear, and rich in resounding verses. The other took hold of the thing itself; aye, and split it up, if necessary. He treated our Lord's creation like some vast piece of arithmetic; subtracted, multiplied, wished to know it outside and inside, and to talk of it with reason; nothing but reason; and he talked of it in gladness too, and cleverly. They were good, glad-hearted men, both of them.

"Yonder sits a fine specimen of a toad," said the naturalist; "I must have it in spirits."

"You have two already," said the poet. "Let it sit in peace, and enjoy itself."

"But it is so beautifully ugly!" said the other.

"Yes, if we could find the jewel in its head," said the poet, "then I myself might lend a hand in splitting it up."

"The jewel!" said the other. "Much you know about natural history!"

"But is there not something very fine, at least, in the popular belief that the toad, the ugliest of creatures, often hides in its head the most precious of all jewels? Is it not much the same with men? Was there not such a jewel hidden in Æsop, and Socrates too?"

The toad heard nothing more; and even so far it did not understand half of it. The two friends went on, and it escaped being put into spirits.

"They were talking about the jewel, too," said the toad. "I am just as well without it; otherwise I should have got into trouble."

There was a clattering upon the farmer's roof. Father Stork was delivering a lecture to his family, while they all looked down askant at the two young men in the cabbage garden.

"Man is the most conceited of creatures," said the stork. "Hark, how they are going on—clatter, clatter—and yet they cannot rattle off a regular tattoo. They puff themselves up with notions of their eloquence—their language. A rare language indeed; it shifts from one jabber to another, at every day's journey. Our language we can talk the whole world over, whether in Denmark or in Egypt. As for flying, they can't manage

it at all. They push along by means of a contrivance which they call a 'railway,' but there they often get their necks broken. It gives me the shivers in my bill when I think of it. The world can exist without men. What good are they to us? All that we want are frogs and earthworms."

"That was a grand speech now," thought the little toad. "What a great man he is, and how high he sits; higher than I have ever seen any one before; and how well he can swim," it exclaimed, as the stork took flight through the air with outstretched wings.

And Mother Stork talked in the nest. She told of the land of Egypt, of the water of the Nile, and of the first-rate mud that was to be found in foreign parts; it sounded quite fresh and charming in the ears of the little toad.

"I must go to Egypt," it said. "O, if the stork would only give me a lift; or one of the young ones might take me. I would do the youngster some service in my turn, on his wedding day. I am sure I shall get to Egypt, for I am so lucky; and all the longing and the yearning which I feel; surely, this is better than having a jewel in one's head."

And it had it—the true jewel; the eternal longing and yearning to go upward, ever upward. This was the jewel, and it shone within it, shone with gladness and beamed with desire.

At that very moment came the stork. He had seen the toad in the grass, and he swooped down and took hold of the little creature, not over tenderly. The bill pinched; the wind whistled; it was not quite comfortable. But still it was going upward, and away to Egypt, it knew; and that was why its eyes glittered, till it seemed as if a spark flew out of them.

"Quack—ack!"

The body was dead, the toad was killed. But the spark out of its eyes, what became of *that*?

The sunbeam took it; the sunbeam bore away the jewel from the head of the toad. Whither?

You must not ask the naturalist; rather ask the poet. He will tell it you as a fairy tale; and the caterpillar will take a share in it, and the stork family will take a share in it. Think, the caterpillar will be changed, and become a beautiful butterfly! The stork family will fly over mountains and seas far away to Africa, and yet find the shortest way home again to the Danish land, to the same spot, to the same roof! Yes, it is all nearly too much like a fairy tale—and yet it is true. You may fairly ask the naturalist about the truth of it; he will admit *that*, and, indeed, you know it yourself, for you have seen it.

But the jewel in the toad's head? Look for it in the sun; look *at* it if you can.

The splendor is too strong. We have not yet eyes that can look into

all the glories which God hath revealed; but some day we shall have them, and that will be the most beautiful fairy tale of all, for we ourselves shall take a share in it.

THE DARNING NEEDLE

THERE WAS once a darning needle, who thought herself so fine, she imagined she was an embroidering needle.

"Take care, and mind you hold me tight!" she said to the fingers that took her out. "Don't let me fall! If I fall on the ground I shall certainly never be found again, for I am so fine!"

"That's as it may be," said the fingers; and they grasped her round the body.

"See, I'm coming with a train!" said the darning needle, and she drew a long thread after her, but there was no knot in the thread.

The fingers pointed the needle just at the cook's slipper, in which the upper leather had burst, and was to be sewn together.

"That's vulgar work," said the darning needle. "I shall never get through. I'm breaking! I'm breaking!" And she really broke. "Did I not say so?" said the darning needle; "I'm too fine!"

"Now it's quite useless," said the fingers; but they were obliged to hold her fast, all the same; for the cook dropped some sealing wax upon the needle, and pinned her handkerchief together with it in front.

"So, now I'm a breastpin!" said the darning needle. "I knew very well that I should come to honor: when one is something, one comes to something!"

And she laughed quietly to herself—and one can never see when a darning needle laughs. There she sat, as proud as if she was in a state coach, and looked all about her.

"May I be permitted to ask if you are of gold?" she inquired of the pin, her neighbor. "You have a very pretty appearance, and a peculiar head, but it is only little. You must take pains to grow, for it's not every one that has sealing wax dropped upon him."

And the darning needle drew herself up so proudly that she fell out of the handkerchief right into the sink, which the cook was rinsing out.

"Now we're going on a journey," said the darning needle. "If I only don't get lost!"

But she really was lost.

"I'm too fine for this world," she observed, as she lay in the gutter. "But I know who I am, and there's always something in that!"

So the darning needle kept her proud behavior, and did not lose her good humor. And things of many kinds swam over her, chips and straws and pieces of old newspapers.

"Only look how they sail!" said the darning needle. "They don't know what is under them! I'm here, I remain firmly here. See, there goes a chip thinking of nothing in the world but of himself—of a chip! There's a straw going by now. How he turns! how he twirls about! Don't think only of yourself, you might easily run up against a stone. There swims a bit of newspaper. What's written upon it has long been forgotten, and yet it gives itself airs. I sit quietly and patiently here. I know who I am, and I shall remain what I am."

One day something lay close beside her that glittered splendidly; then the darning needle believed that it was a diamond; but it was a bit of broken bottle; and because it shone, the darning needle spoke to it, introducing herself as a breastpin.

"I suppose you are a diamond?" she observed.

"Why, yes, something of that kind."

And then each believed the other to be a very valuable thing; and they began speaking about the world, and how very conceited it was.

"I have been in a lady's box," said the darning needle, "and this lady was a cook. She had five fingers on each hand, and I never saw anything so conceited as those five fingers. And yet they were only there that they might take me out of the box and put me back into it."

"Were they of good birth?" asked the bit of bottle.

"No, indeed," replied the darning needle, "but very haughty. There were five brothers, all of the finger family. They kept very proudly together, though they were of different lengths: the outermost, the thumbing, was short and fat; he walked out in front of the ranks, and only had one joint in his back, and could only make a single bow; but he said that if he were hacked off a man, that man was useless for service in war. Daintymouth, the second finger, thrust himself into sweet and sour, pointed to sun and moon, and gave the impression when they wrote. Longman, the third, looked at all the others over his shoulder. Goldborder, the fourth, went about with a golden belt round his waist; and little Playman did nothing at all, and was proud of it. There was nothing but bragging among them, and therefore I went away."

"And now we sit here and glitter!" said the bit of bottle.

At that moment more water came into the gutter, so that it overflowed, and the bit of bottle was carried away.

"So he is disposed of," observed the darning needle. "I remain here. I am too fine. But that's my pride, and my pride is honorable." And proudly she sat there, and had many great thoughts. "I could almost believe I had been born of a sunbeam, I'm so fine! It really appears as

if the sunbeams were always seeking for me under the water. Ah! I'm so fine that my mother cannot find me. If I had my old eye, which broke off, I think I should cry; but, no, I should not do that: it's not genteel to cry."

One day a couple of street boys lay grubbing in the gutter, where they sometimes found old nails, farthings, and similar treasures. It was dirty work, but they took great delight in it.

"O!" cried one, who had pricked himself with the darning needle, "there's a fellow for you!"

"I'm not a fellow; I'm a young lady!" said the darning needle.

But nobody listened to her. The sealing wax had come off, and she had turned black; but black makes one look slender, and she thought herself finer even than before.

"Here comes an eggshell sailing along!" said the boys; and they stuck the darning needle fast in the eggshell.

"White walls, and black myself! that looks well," remarked the darning needle. "Now one can see me. I only hope I shall not be seasick!" But she was not seasick at all. "It is good against seasickness, if one has a steel stomach, and does not forget that one is a little more than an ordinary person! Now my seasickness is over. The finer one is, the more one can bear."

"Crack!" went the eggshell, for a wagon went over her.

"Good heavens, how it crushes one!" said the darning needle. "I'm getting seasick now—I'm quite sick."

But she was not really sick, though the wagon went over her; she lay there at full length, and there she may lie.

THE RED SHOES

THERE WAS once a little girl. She was a tiny delicate little thing, but she always had to go about barefoot in summer, because she was very poor. In winter she had only a pair of heavy wooden shoes, and her ankles were terribly chafed.

An old mother shoemaker lived in the middle of the village, and she made a pair of little shoes out of some strips of red cloth. They were very clumsy, but they were made with the best intention, for the little girl was to have them. Her name was Karen.

These shoes were given to her, and she wore them for the first time on the day her mother was buried. They were certainly not mourning-

shoes, but she had no others, and so she walked barelegged in them behind the poor pine coffin.

Just then a big old carriage drove by, and a big old lady was seated in it. She looked at the little girl and felt very, very sorry for her, and said to the parson, "Give the little girl to me and I will look after her and be kind to her." Karen thought it was all because of the red shoes, but the old lady said they were hideous, and they were burnt. Karen was well and neatly dressed, and had to learn reading and sewing. People said she was pretty, but her mirror said, "You are more than pretty. You are lovely!"

At this time the Queen was taking a journey through the country, and she had her little daughter the Princess with her. The people, and among them Karen, crowded round the palace where they were staying, to see them. The little Princess stood at a window to show herself. She wore neither a train nor a golden crown, but she was dressed all in white with a beautiful pair of red morocco shoes. They were indeed a contrast to those the poor old mother shoemaker had made for Karen. Nothing in the world could be compared to these red shoes.

The time came when Karen was old enough to be confirmed. She had new clothes and she was also to have a pair of new shoes. The rich shoemaker in the town was to take the measure of her little foot. His shop was full of glass cases of the most charming shoes and shiny leather boots. They looked beautiful but the old lady could not see very well, so it gave her no pleasure to look at them. Among all the other shoes there was one pair of red shoes like those worn by the Princess. Oh, how pretty they were! The shoemaker told them that they had been made for an earl's daughter, but they had not fitted. "I suppose they are patent leather," said the old lady. "They are so shiny."

"Yes, they do shine," said Karen, who tried them on. They fitted and were bought, but the old lady had not the least idea that they were red, or she would never have allowed Karen to wear them for her confirmation. This she did however.

Everybody looked at her feet, and when she walked up the church to the chancel she thought that even the old pictures, those portraits of dead and gone priests and their wives, with stiff collars and long black clothes, fixed their eyes upon her shoes. She thought of nothing else when the minister laid his hand upon her head and spoke to her of holy baptism, the covenant of God, and said that henceforth she was to be a responsible Christian person. The solemn notes of the organ resounded, the children sang with their sweet voices, and the old precentor sang, but Karen thought only about her red shoes.

By the afternoon the old lady had been told on all sides that the shoes

were red, and she said it was very naughty and most improper. For the future, whenever Karen went to the church she was to wear black shoes, even if they were old. Next Sunday there was holy communion, and Karen was to receive it for the first time. She looked at the black shoes and then at the red ones. Then she looked again at the red—and at last put them on.

It was beautiful sunny weather. Karen and the old lady went by the path through the cornfield, and it was rather dusty. By the church door stood an old soldier with a crutch. He had a curious long beard; it was more red than white—in fact it was almost red. He bent down to the ground and asked the old lady if he might dust her shoes. Karen put out her little foot too. "See what beautiful dancing shoes!" said the soldier. "Mind you stick fast when you dance." And as he spoke he struck the soles with his hand. The old lady gave the soldier a copper and went into the church with Karen. All the people in the church looked at Karen's red shoes, and all the portraits looked too. When Karen knelt at the altar rails and the chalice was put to her lips, she thought only of the red shoes. She seemed to see them floating before her eyes. She forgot to join in the hymn of praise, and she forgot to say the Lord's Prayer.

Now everybody left the church, and the old lady got into her carriage. Karen lifted her foot to get in after her, but just then the old soldier, who was still standing there, said, "See what pretty dancing shoes!" Karen couldn't help it: she took a few dancing steps, and when she began her feet continued to dance. It was just as if the shoes had a power over them. She danced right round the church. She couldn't stop. The coachman had to run after her, take hold of her, and lift her into the carriage; but her feet continued to dance, so that she kicked the poor lady horribly. At last they got the shoes off and her feet had a little rest.

When they got home the shoes were put away in a cupboard, but Karen could not help going to look at them.

The old lady became very ill. They said she could not live. She had to be carefully nursed and tended, and no one was nearer than Karen to do this. But there was to be a grand ball in the town and Karen was invited. She looked at the old lady, who after all could not live. Then she looked at the red shoes—she thought there was no harm in doing so. She put on the red shoes—that much she thought she might do—and then she went to the ball and began to dance. The shoes would not let her do what she liked: when she wanted to go to the right, they danced to the left. When she wanted to dance up the room, the shoes danced down the room, and then down the stairs, through the streets and out of the town gate. Away she danced, and away she had to dance, right

away into the dark forest. Something shone up above the trees and she thought it was the moon, for it was a face, but it was the old soldier with the red beard. He nodded and said, "See what pretty dancing shoes!"

This frightened her terribly and she wanted to throw off the red shoes, but they stuck fast. She tore off her stockings, but the shoes had grown fast to her feet. So off she danced, and off she had to dance, over fields and meadows, in rain and sunshine, by day and by night, but at night it was fearful.

She danced into the open churchyard, but the dead did not join her dance; they had something much better to do. She wanted to sit down on a pauper's grave where the bitter wormwood grew, but there was no rest nor repose for her. When she danced towards the open church door, she saw an angel standing there in long white robes and wings which reached from his shoulders to the ground. His face was grave and stern, and in his hand he held a broad and shining sword.

"Dance you shall!" said he. "You shall dance in your red shoes till you are pale and cold. Till your skin shrivels up and you are a skeleton! You shall dance from door to door, and wherever you find proud vain children, you must knock at the door so that they may see you and fear you. Yea, you shall dance—"

"Mercy!" shrieked Karen, but she did not hear the angel's answer, for the shoes bore her through the gate into the fields, and over roadways and paths. Ever and ever she was forced to dance.

One morning she danced past a door she knew well. She heard the sound of a hymn from within, and a coffin covered with flowers was being carried out. Then she knew that the old lady was dead, and it seemed to her that she was forsaken by all the world and cursed by the holy angels of God.

On and ever on she danced. Dance she must, even through the dark nights. The shoes bore her away over briars and stubble till her feet were torn and bleeding. She danced away over the heath till she came to a little lonely house. She knew the executioner lived here, and she tapped with her fingers on the window pane and said, "Come out! Come out! I can't come in for I am dancing!"

The executioner said, "Don't you know who I am? I chop the bad people's heads off, and I see that my ax is quivering."

"Don't chop my head off," said Karen, "for then I can never repent of my sins. But pray, pray chop off my feet with the red shoes!"

Then she confessed all her sins and the executioner chopped off her feet with the red shoes, but the shoes danced right away with the little feet into the depths of the forest.

Then he made her a pair of wooden feet and crutches, and he taught

her a psalm, the one penitents always sing. And she kissed the hand which had wielded the ax and went away over the heath.

"I have suffered enough for those red shoes!" said she. "I will go to church now, so that they may see me." And she went as fast as she could to the church door. When she got there, the red shoes danced right up in front of her, and she was frightened and went home again.

She was very sad all the week and shed many bitter tears, but when Sunday came she said, "Now then, I have suffered long enough. I should think I am quite as good as many who sit holding their heads so high in church."

She went along quite boldly, but she did not get further than the gate before she saw the red shoes dancing in front of her. She was more frightened than ever and turned back, this time with real repentance in her heart. Then she went to the parson's house and begged to be taken into service. She would be very industrious and work as hard as she could. She didn't care what wages they gave her, if only she might have a roof over her head and live among kind people. The parson's wife was sorry for her, and took her into her service. She proved to be very industrious and thoughtful. She sat very still and listened most attentively in the evening when the parson read the Bible. All the little ones were very fond of her, but when they chattered about finery and dress and about being as beautiful as a queen, she would shake her head.

Next Sunday they all went to church and they asked her if she would go with them, but she looked sadly, with tears in her eyes, at her crutches. And they went without her to hear the word of God, while she sat in her little room alone. It was only big enough for a bed and a chair. She sat there with her prayer book in her hand, and as she read it with a humble mind she heard the notes of the organ, borne from the church by the wind. She raised her tear-stained face and said, "Oh, God help me!"

Then the sun shone brightly round her, and the angel in the white robes whom she had seen that night at the church door stood before her. He no longer held the sharp sword in his hand, but a beautiful green branch covered with roses. He touched the ceiling with it and it rose to a great height, and wherever he touched it a golden star appeared. Then he touched the walls and they spread themselves out, and she saw and heard the organ. She saw the pictures of the old parsons and their wives. The congregation were all sitting in their seats singing aloud—for the church itself had come home to the poor girl in her narrow little chamber, or else she had been taken to it. She found herself on the bench with the other people from the parsonage. And when the hymn had come to an end, they looked up and nodded to her and said, "It was a good thing you came after all, little Karen!"

"It was through God's mercy!" she said. The organ sounded and the children's voices echoed so sweetly through the choir. The warm sunshine streamed brightly in through the window, right up to the bench where Karen sat. Her heart was so overfilled with the sunshine, with peace, and with joy, that it broke. Her soul flew with the sunshine to heaven, and no one there asked about the red shoes.

THE FALSE COLLAR

THERE WAS once a fine gentleman, whose whole movables were a bootjack and a hair comb: but he had the finest false collars in the world; and it is about one of these collars that we are now to hear a story.

It was so old, that it began to think of marriage; and it happened, that it came to be washed in company with a garter.

"Nay!" said the collar, "I never did see anything so slender and so fine, so soft and so neat. May I not ask your name?"

"That I shall not tell you!" said the garter.

"Where do you live?" asked the collar.

But the garter was so bashful, so modest, and thought it was a strange question to answer.

"You are certainly a girdle," said the collar; "that is to say, an inside girdle. I see well that you are both for use and ornament, my dear young lady."

"I will thank you not to speak to me," said the garter. "I think I have not given the least occasion for it."

"Yes! when one is as handsome as you," said the collar, "that is occasion enough."

"Don't come so near me, I beg of you!" said the garter. "You look so much like those menfolks."

"I am also a fine gentleman," said the collar. "I have a bootjack and a hair comb."

But that was not true, or it was his master who had them: but he boasted.

"Don't come so near me," said the garter: "I am not accustomed to it."

"Prude!" exclaimed the collar; and then it was taken out of the washtub. It was starched, hung over the back of a chair in the sunshine, and was then laid on the ironing-blanket; then came the warm box iron. "Dear lady!" said the collar. "Dear widow lady! I feel quite hot."

I am quite changed. I begin to unfold myself. You will burn a hole in me. O! I offer you my hand."

"Rag!" said the box iron; and went proudly over the collar: for she fancied she was a steam engine, that should go on the railroad and draw the wagons. "Rag!" said the box iron.

The collar was a little jagged at the edge, and so came the long scissors to cut off the jagged part.

"O!" said the collar, "you are certainly the first opera dancer. How well you can stretch your legs out! It is the most graceful performance I have ever seen. No one can imitate you."

"I know it," said the scissors.

"You deserve to be a baroness," said the collar. "All that I have, is a fine gentleman, a bootjack, and a hair comb. If I only had the barony!"

"Do you seek my hand?" said the scissors; for she was angry; and, without more ado, she *cut him*; and then he was condemned

"I shall now be obliged to ask the hair comb.—It is surprising how well you preserve your teeth, Miss," said the collar. "Have you never thought of being betrothed?"

"Yes, of course! you may be sure of that," said the hair comb. "I am betrothed—to the bootjack!"

"Betrothed!" exclaimed the collar. Now there was no other to court, and so he despired it.

A long time passed away, then the collar came into the rag chest at the paper mill; there was a large company of rags, the fine by themselves, and the coarse by themselves, just as it should be. They all had much to say, but the collar the most, for he was a real boaster.

"I have had such an immense number of sweethearts!" said the collar, "I could not be in peace! It is true, I was also a fine starched-up gentleman! I had both a bootjack and a hair comb, which I never used! You should have seen me then: you should have seen me when I lay down! I shall never forget my first love, she was a girdle, so fine, so soft, and so charming; she threw herself into a tub of water for my sake. There was also a widow, who became glowing hot, but I left her standing till she got black again; there was also the first opera dancer, she gave me that cut which I now go with, she was so ferocious! My own hair comb was in love with me; she lost all her teeth from the heartache; yes I have lived to see much of that sort of thing but I am extremely sorry for the garter—I mean the girdle—that went into the watertub. I have much on my conscience; I want to become white paper!"

And it became so, all the rags were turned into white paper; but the collar came to be just this very piece of white paper we here see, and

on which the story is printed; and that was because it boasted so terribly afterwards of what had never happened to it. It would be well for us to beware, that we may not act in a similar manner, for we can never know if we may not, in the course of time, also come into the rag chest, and be made into white paper, and then have our whole life's history printed on it, even the most secret, and be obliged to run about and tell it ourselves, just like this collar.

THE TINDER BOX

A SOLDIER came marching along the highroad. One, two! One, two! He had his knapsack on his back and his sword at his side, for he had been to the wars and now he was on his way home. He met an old witch on the road. She was so ugly that her lower lip hung right down onto her chin.

She said, "Good evening, soldier! What a nice sword you've got, and such a big knapsack. You are a real soldier! You shall have as much money as ever you like."

"Thank you kindly, you old witch," said the soldier.

"Do you see that big tree?" said the witch, pointing to a tree close by. "It is hollow inside. Climb up to the top and you will see a hole into which you can let yourself down, right down under the tree. I will tie a rope round your waist so that I can haul you up again when you call."

"What am I to do down under the tree?" asked the soldier.

"Fetch money," said the witch. "You must know that when you get down to the bottom of the tree you will find yourself in a wide passage. It's quite light there, for there are over a hundred blazing lamps. You will see three doors which you can open, for the keys are there. If you go into the first room you will see a big box in the middle of the floor. A dog is sitting on the top of it and he has eyes as big as saucers, but you needn't mind that. I will give you my blue-checked apron, which you can spread out on the floor. Go quickly forward, take up the dog, and put him on my apron. Then open the box and take out as much money as you like. It is all copper, but if you like silver better, go into the next room. There you will find a dog with eyes as big as millstones. But never mind that. Put him on my apron and take the money. If you prefer gold you can have it too, and as much as you can carry, if you go into the third room. But the dog sitting on that box has eyes each as big as the Round Tower. He is a dog, indeed, as you may imagine.

But don't let it trouble you. You only have to put him on my apron. Then he won't hurt you, and you can take as much gold out of the box as you like!"

"That's not so bad," said the soldier. "But what am I to give you, old witch? You'll want something, I'll be bound."

"No," said the witch. "Not a single penny do I want. I only want you to bring me an old tinder box that my grandmother forgot the last time she was down there."

"Well, tie the rope round my waist," said the soldier.

"Here it is," said the witch. "And here is my blue-checked apron."

Then the soldier climbed up the tree, let himself slide down the hollow trunk, and found himself, as the witch had said, in the wide passage where the many hundred lamps were burning.

Now he opened the first door. Ugh! There sat the dog with eyes as big as saucers staring at him.

"You are a nice fellow!" said the soldier, as he put him onto the witch's apron and took out as many pennies as he could cram into his pockets. Then he shut the box, put the dog on the top of it again, and went into the next room. Hallo! There sat the dog with eyes as big as millstones.

"You shouldn't stare at me so hard. You might get a pain in your eyes!" Then he put the dog on the apron, but when he saw all the silver in the box he threw away all the coppers and stuffed his pockets and his knapsack with silver. Then he went into the third room. Oh, how horrible! That dog really had two eyes as big as the Round Tower, and they rolled around and around like wheels.

"Good evening," said the soldier, saluting, for he had never seen such a dog in his life. But after looking at him for a bit he thought, "That will do." And then he lifted him down onto the apron and opened the chest. Heavens! What a lot of gold! He could buy the whole of Copenhagen with it, and all the sugar pigs from the cake-woman, all the tin soldiers, whips, and rocking horses in the world. That was money indeed! Now the soldier threw away all the silver he had filled his pockets and his knapsack with and put gold in its place. Yes, he crammed all his pockets, his knapsack, his cap, and his boots so full that he could hardly walk. Now, he really had got a lot of money. He put the dog back onto the box, shut the door, and shouted up through the tree, "Haul me up, you old witch!"

"Have you got the tinder box?"

"Oh, to be sure!" said the soldier. "I had quite forgotten it." And he went back to fetch it. The witch hauled him up, and there he was standing on the highroad again with his pockets, boots, knapsack, and cap full of gold.